STOP THE LEGAL LYNCHING OF MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

To our liberation movements, the international community, and all progressive people:

The State of Pennsylvania is planning the execution of a U.S. political prisoner. Unless we organize to stop it MUMIA ABU-JAMAL will soon become the first political prisoner executed in this country since the Rosenbergs.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has been on death row since 1982. A former Black Panther, a journalist, and a supporter of MOVE, Mumia has been a target of the Philadelphia Police Department since the late 1960's. His articles for the Panther Party newspaper exposed the racist violence of the Philadelphia police and their chief, Frank Rizzo. Rizzo's response was a military style raid against the Panther headquarters, vicious beatings of its members, and a series of trumped-up charges. Mumia was one of those singled out.

In the 1970's, Frank Rizzo was the 'law and order' mayor of Philadelphia, and Mumia was one of the few journalists willing to speak out against the violence of his administration. In 1978, when Rizzo ordered the policy to beseige and then assault a MOVE house, Mumia was the only reporter to interview MOVE members. Rizzo publicly vowed revenge.

In December 1981, Mumia saw his brother being beaten by a policeman. Mumia intervened. The policeman was killed and Mumia critically wounded. The trial was a farce presided over by a judge who was a retired member of the Fraternal Order of Police. He refused Mumia's request to represent himself. Black people were systematically excluded from the jury. An article about Mumia at age 16 for the Philadelphia Inquirer was introduced to prove 'intent' of an alleged long-held wish to kill cops and to thus secure the death penalty.

There is a long history of using the death penalty against radicals: Haymarket Square martyrs, Joe Hill, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Rosenbergs. Numerous organizers of the African-American, Native American, Mexican, Puerto Rican and Asian American communities historically have been executed with or without the benefit of a trial. In the 1960's and 70's, one of the tactics favoured by the FBI was to accuse those it considered enemies of the government of shooting at or killing police. This was used to justify the police executions of Panthers Bobby Hutton, Zayd Malik Shakur and Fred Hampton, and of Puerto Rican Independence activists Soto-Arrivi and Dario Rosado. Some of the longest-held political prisoners and prisoners-of-war in the U.S., including many former Black Panthers and American Indian Movement leader, Leonard Peltier, are still held in prison on trumped-up charges of killing police or FBI agents. Dhoruba bin Wahad, a former leader of the New York Black Panther Party, was recently freed after doing 19 years in prison on a fabricated charge of shooting two police.

We need to stop the railroad of Mumia Abu-Jamal. The death penalty means we have little time to do it. Mumia has exhausted his state appeals and Pennsylvania's governor Robert Casey has begun signing death warrants. The U.S. Supreme Court just added it own blessing by refusing to review the case.

We must not allow the same racist fear and hatred of African-American self-determination that brought about COINTELPRO to execute Mumia. We cannot allow the state to finish the job the FBI and Philadelphia police started when they dropped the bomb on the MOVE house in May 1985 killing 11 men, women and children, by putting Mumia Abu-Jamal to death. We must put a stop to this genocidal agenda that has put more than 2400 Third World and white working class people on death rows around the country. The death penalty has already been used to kill children, the mentally retarded, and the innocent. Now, unless we stop it, it will be again used as a tool of political revenge. The struggle against racism and injustice in this country has had enough martyrs.

We, the undersigned Prisoners of War, political prisoners, and politically conscious social prisoners demand that Governor Casey commute the death sentence of Mumia Abu-Jamal. (Write to Gov. Robert Casey, Main Capitol Bldg., Rm. 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120.) We call upon our movements, our communities, progressive nations and all anti-racist people committed to human rights to join us in undertaking all possible measures to stop this execution. We urge you to adopt this case as the highest priority in the struggle for justice. Only our collective power can save this man that the Black community of Philadelphia calls "the Voice of the Voiceless."

Sundiata Acoli
Carlos Africa
Chuckie (Sims) Africa
Delbert (Orr) Africa
Ramona Africa
William Phillips Africa
Silvia Baraldini
A. Jahaad Bernier
Herman Bell
Alan Berkman
Tim Blunk
Anthony X Bradshaw
Marilyn Buck
Judy Clark
Mark Cook
Pamela Cooper
William Davenport-El
Bill Dunne
Malik S. El-Amin
Lawrence Atiim Epps
Elizam Escobar
Linda Evans
Herman Ferguson
Bro. Cecilio Chui Ferguson-El
Walter Figueroa
Larry W. Giddings
David Gilbert
Rickke L. Green
Bashir Hameed
Tarik James Haskins
Eddie Hatcher
Robert Seth' Hayes
Teddy Jah Heath & 80 brothers at Sullivan prison, Fallsburg, N.Y.
Sekou Imarobge
Ricardo Hunter-Bey
Sekou Cinque T.M. Kambui
Yu Kikumura
Barbara Curzi-Laaman
Jaan Karl Laaman
Maliki Shakur Latine
Raymond Luc Levasseur
Abdul Majid
Carol Manning
Tom Manning
Adolpho Matos
Ed Mead
Jalil Muntaquin
Sekou Odinga
Carl Kabet Omi
Dylcia Pagán
Richard Picariello
Michael Pitts
Geronimo jiJaga Pratt
Ida Luz Rodríguez
Susan Rosenberg
Hanif Shábazz Bey
Mutulu Shakur
Yusuf A. Shakur
Gregory Smith
Standing Deer
Awali Stoneham
Kojo Bomani Sababu
Richard Thompson
Alejandrina Torres
Kazi Toure
Carmen Valentín
Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa
Nuh Washington
Laura Whitehorn
Richard Williams
Paul Wright
Jerry Zawada

• FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL! • ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY! • • FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND POWS! •

Funds are urgently needed to support the campaign to save Mumia's life!
New African Network in Defence of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, P.O. Box 90604, Washington, D.C. 20090
Freedom Now!/DC Campaign for Amnesty and Human Rights for Political Prisoners in the U.S., P.O. Box 28191, Washington, D.C. 20038
Partisan Defense Committee, c/o Rachel Wolkenstein, Esq., P.O. Box 99 Canal Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10013

Name _____

Address _____

_____

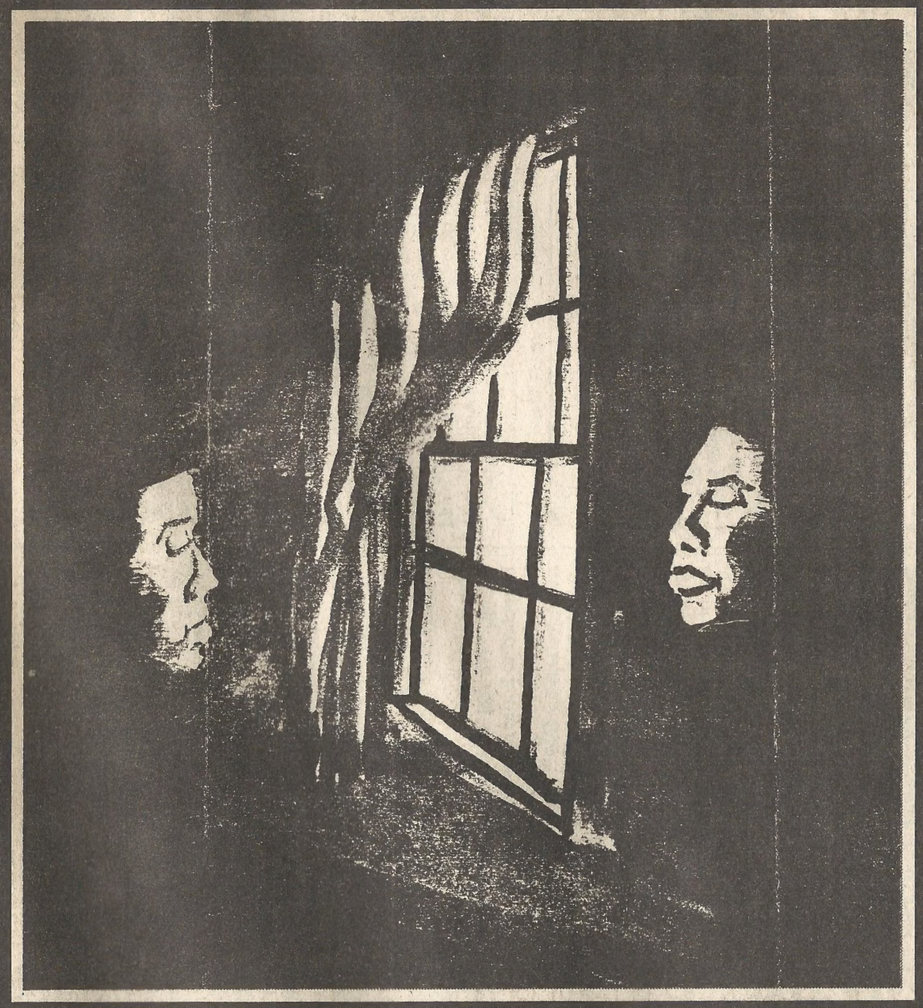
___ Enclosed is donation of $ _____ ____ Please send me more information

Clip and send to one of the groups above, earmark for Mumia campaign.

A Bulldozer Publication

Prison News Service

July/August 1991 • Number 31



TOM MANNING Amor y Solidad

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THE MARIONETTE begins page 10

Peltier Gets New Court Hearing

by S. Harrison

In the case that refuses to die, American Indian Movement (AIM) activist and long-term political prisoner Leonard Peltier has been granted an evidenciary hearing on July/29/91 in Fargo, N.D. Peltier's attorney filed a writ of *Habeas Corpus* last December on the grounds that constitutional due process was violated because the government misinformed Peltier and the court of the charges for which he was tried. Though by the time this is being read, the hearing will have been held, it seems definite that the struggle to free Leonard is once again picking up steam.

Presstime Update:
It seems that some good news just doesn't last. The hearing has been postponed indefinitely. Please contact the addresses given on page 11 for more information, and keep the pressure on U.S. and Canadian governments to free Leonard.

Efforts are also underway, led by Senator Daniel K. Inouye, chair of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, to get clemency from the kinder, gentler Bush. The true facts of this case are beginning to outweigh the incredible burden of lies generated to keep him behind bars. Amongst the most outrageous, were affidavits, some withheld when they contradicted others, given by the only "eyewitness" the FBI could produce in revenge for the killing of two of its agents in a 1975 shootout, and which led directly to Peltier's extradition from Canada. This "eyewitness" was Myrtle Poor Bear, a psychologically unstable woman who had been threatened and cajoled and later recanted her testimony.

It has been known for many years that the Poor Bear affidavits were fabricated by the FBI, but in 1989 the Supreme Court of Canada, in rejecting an appeal on the 1976 extradition acknowledged the fraud and deception by U.S. authorities and recommended that redress be sought from the Canadian Parliament which refused to do anything, so efforts returned to the U.S.

Private members' bills have been presented to Parliament asking for Peltier's return to Canada without any success. But the social democratic New Democratic Party (NDP) adopted a resolution at its national conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia in June that acknowledges the miscarriage of justice resulting from the fraudulent extradition, and resolved that the federal NDP would work to return Leonard to Canada. Though the resolution itself is not binding if the NDP were to win the next federal election or be part of a governing coalition, it does show the extent to which Leonard's case has become part of national politics. The resolution was adopted, to the surprise of even his primary supporters in the NDP caucus in Parliament.

Probably the most surprising development has been the support for presidential clemency coming from Judge Heaney of the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. Heaney, in rejecting Peltier's application for an appeal in 1985, wrote what is now a notorious decision, which he mentions in his letter to Senator Inouye of Hawaii which is reprinted on this page.

To add to the pressures on the U.S. to free Peltier, it has been revealed that another individual shot and killed the agents in self-defence. Peltier, of course, has never asked that this person come forward, knowing that no justice would be served in U.S. courts. But Peter Mathiessen, in his book *In The Spirit of Crazy Horse*, includes in the epilogue his interview with this individual. The book itself was held up on libel charges for

Continued on page 8

April 18, 1991

Re: Leonard Peltier

Dear Senator Inouye:

Unfortunately I did not receive your letter of February 1, 1991 until April 13, 1991. When I did receive your letter, I was visiting your state. Thus, this is my first chance to reply.

As you know, I wrote the opinion in *United States v. Peltier*, 800 F.2d 772 (8th Cir. 1986), and I sat as a member of the court in an earlier appeal, *United States v. Peltier*, 731 F.2d 550 (8th Cir. 1984). In the case I authored, our court concluded:

> There is a *possibility* that the jury would have acquitted Leonard Peltier had the records and data improperly withheld from the defense been available to him in order to better exploit and reinforce the inconsistencies casting strong doubts upon the government's case. Yet, we are bound by the *Bagley* test requiring that we be convinced, from a review of the entire record, that had the data and records withheld been made available, the jury *probably* would have reached a different result. We have not been so convinced.

United States v. Peltier, 731 F.2d at 779-80. No new evidence has been called to my attention which would cause me to change the conclusion reached in that case.

There are, however, other aspects of the case that the President may see fit to consider in determining whether he should take action to commute or otherwise mitigate the sentence of Leonard Peltier. My thoughts on these other aspects result from a very careful study of the records of the Peltier trial and the post-trial evidence and from a study of the record in the Robideau-Butler trial before Judge McManus in Iowa, a trial which resulted in the acquittal of Robideau and Butler.

First, the United States government over-reacted at Wounded Knee. Instead of carefully considering the legitimate grievances of the Native Americans, the response was essentially a military one which culminated in a deadly firefight on June 26, 1975 between the Native Americans and the FBI agents and the United States marshals.

Second, the United States government must share the responsibility with the Native Americans for the June 26 firefight. It was an intense one in which both government agents and Native Americans were killed. While the government's role in escalating the conflict into a firefight cannot serve as a legal justification for the killing of the FBI agents at short range, it can properly be considered as a mitigating circumstance.

Third, the record persuades me that more than one person was involved in the shooting of the FBI agents. Again, this fact is not a legal justification for Peltier's actions, but it is a mitigating circumstance.

Fourth, the FBI used improper tactics in securing Peltier's extradition from Canada and in otherwise investigating and trying the *Peltier* case. Although our court decided that these actions were not grounds for reversal, they are, in my view, factors that merit consideration in any petition for leniency filed.

Fifth, Leonard Peltier was tried, found guilty, and sentenced. He has now served more than fourteen years in the federal penitentiary. At some point, a healing process must begin. We as a nation must treat Native Americans more fairly. To do so, we must recognize their unique culture and their great contributions to our nation. Favorable action by the President in the Leonard Peltier case would be an important step in this regard. I recognize that this decision lies solely within the President's discretion. I simply state my view based on the record presented to our court. I authorize you to show this letter to the President if you desire to do so.

Again, I am sorry your letter was not delivered to me at an earlier date.

Sincerely,
Gerald W. Heaney

A Rising of the Damned

by Bill Dunne

Southport Correctional Facility is New York State's euphemism for its newly locked-down control unit prison. Located in rural Elmira, NY, it was converted from an open population prison to a 23-hour per day lockdown dungeon in Jan/90. It is supposedly necessary as a repository for some 700 prisoners held by New York State who it bills as "the worst of the worst", a claim used ad nauseum to justify increasingly abusive prison conditions in recent years.

For 27 hours on 28-29/May/91, it was the prisoners who held Southport. On 28/May/91, 53 prisoners broke out of wire recreation pens, seized five guards and took over part of the joint. Two injured hostages were released soon after the takeover. After a tense standoff and negotiations, the hostages were released and prisoners surrendered on 29/May in exchange for a TV interview and airing of their demands to other prisoners. The abuses that precipitated their desperate action included needless harassment and beatings by guards, bad food, inadequate medical care and unreasonably limited visiting. Officials said that charges may be filed against all or some of the prisoners.

It is not difficult to imagine the privation that precipitated the rebellion or to perceive its justification. Even guards acknowledge that trouble had been brewing for months. Prisoners at Southport must spend 23 hours per day in 7-1/2 x 9-1/2 foot cells whose fronts are pencil-thick steel rods woven into two-inch squares. There are no programs and the only entertainment is a meager amount of personal reading material and a state-issue earphone that plugs into a wall jack with three radio stations. Only two showers per week are permitted. Commissary is only a few items like shaving cream, soap, paper and stamps. Food is served by protective custody prisoners, a sick joke which further diminishes its already low quality. It is used as a punishment — a cabbage and "nutra-loaf" diet. Medical care is frequently denied or slow-played, a common tactic to increase the punishment value in the new wave of maxi control units. Visits are contact, but only one per week is allowed and only on weekends and holidays.

Into this pressure cooker were added disgruntled guards. The conversion to a dungeon cost roughly 40 civilian and 60 guards jobs and also drastically cut the opportunities for graft. Rumors of further cutbacks in staff (salaries account for about 80% of the budget at lockdown Marion) as the state confronts its budgetary crises made the swine feel pressed to defend themselves. By increasing the pressure on prisoners, some sort of attention-grabbing incident could be virtually guaranteed if a succession of smaller ones were inadequate to protect porcine paychecks. This is especially true where opportunities for such incidents are allowed to remain. Fights between prisoners are easy to arrange by putting certain people together in recreational cages. And it is unreasonable to believe that the so-called professionals to whom the courts and others are so willing to defer in security matters couldn't determine that the recreational cages were as insecure as those at Southport. The swine also know their instigation was working from repeated protest, like the March refusal of a group of prisoners to come in from the rec cages.

According to New York prison officials, there are no plans to change the Southport facility from a control unit. Evidence indicates that it will only get worse — more inhumane and more destructive. The control unit prison trend, begun in 1983 with the lockdown of the entire federal penitentiary at Marion, IL, has already reached 36 states. More dungeon capacity is being built. Many elements of control unitization have been incorporated in parts of other prisons. All face similar pressures to the prisoners at Southport, but very few will have the opportunity the Southport prisoners had to relieve it — at least til they're released. ∞

The Murderers Among Us

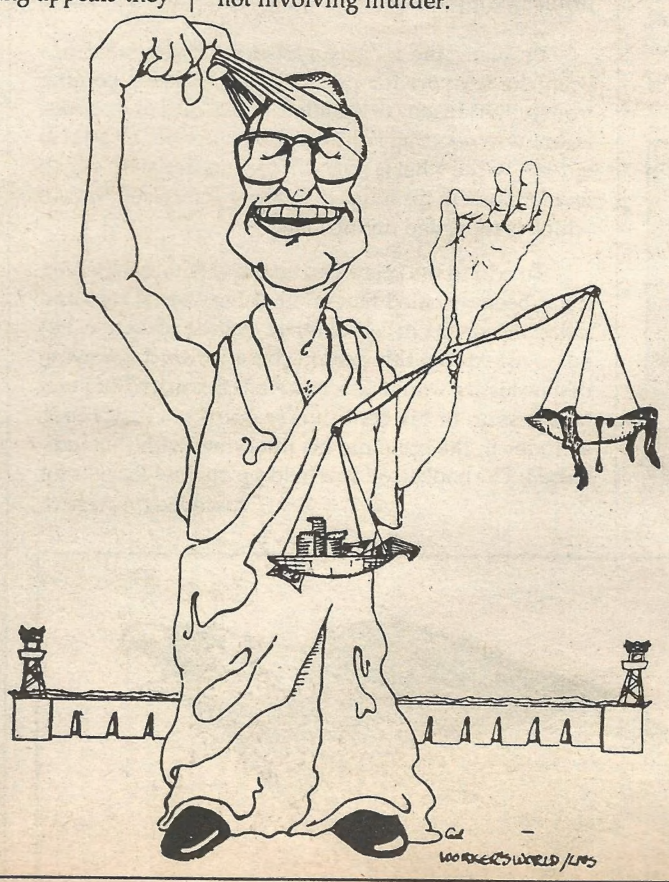
by Bill Dunne

The apparatchiks of the U.S. ruling class continue to demonstrate the murder mania engendered by fears among the powerful about future unrest stemming from economic decline. They continue to swat aside or drive over even the most reasonable objections to allowing the apparatus of repression to wield the death penalty club with no strings attached.

Illustrating the class character of the drive toward official murder in the U.S. was the 27/June/91 U.S. Supreme Court decision to allow "victim impact evidence" at hearings to determine whether a death sentence will be imposed in capital cases. This decision overruled 1987 and 1989 Supreme Court precedents saying that only the nature of the offense and character of the offender were appropriate for consideration at such hearings. It also undermines the rule of law by injecting irrelevant emotionalism into what are already highly charged proceedings. And who can doubt that contrasting the social and economic stations of victims and perpetrators will result in even more instances of the rich getting off and the poor getting offed by government gassing, shooting, hanging, poisoning and electrocution.

Showing how little value the legal lords place upon the common lives that end up in their clutches, the Supreme Court on 24/June denied federal government review of a death sentence on a petty technicality. The court decreed that because a Virginia death row prisoner had missed a state court filing date by three days, he was foreclosed from appealing to federal courts. On the same day, the court further curtailed access to federal courts by ruling that the failure of the California State Supreme Court to state its reasons for denying an appeal wasn't sufficient ground to grant a federal court review. This creates an incentive for increased judicial secrecy: if state courts write opinions denying appeals they may be overturned as erroneous, whereas denials without reasons are now okay.

Even the legislative lords have been getting in on the act. On 24/June/91, U.S. Senate Democrats agreed with the Bush administration on authorizing the death penalty for more than 50 federal crimes, one of which is murder committed with a firearm that has crossed state lines. This includes virtually all murders by gun, the vast majority, because guns are manufactured in only a few states and typically have a long life of being passed along. The senatorial swine also agreed that if a federal court challenge of a death sentence is allowed, it must be made within six months. Considering the high court's action on deadlines, this means that even wrongful convictions will stand if the evidence to overturn them is not uncovered very fast — an extremely difficult task, considering most defendants' meager resources, especially where government misconduct and/or setups are involved. Official malfeasance is a frequent characteristic of political prosecutions: witness Leonard Peltier, Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt and Dhoruba bin-Wahad, for a few glaring examples. The state satraps also went so far as to approve the death penalty for "drug kingpins" in cases not involving murder.



These provisions will still have to be reconciled with crime legislation pending in the U.S. House of Representatives and so **might** not actually become law. Nevertheless, the revelations they provide about the thinking and intent of the ruling class represented in the millionaires club known as the U.S. Senate is an ominous portent of the future.

While the details of the legalization of state killing continue to be hammered out, its gruesome toll continues to mount. In the midst of the foregoing machinations, Bobby Francis was electrocuted by the state of Florida on 26/June for the 1975 killing of a drug rat, Titus Walters. His was the 148th execution since capital punishment was resumed in the U.S. in 1976, an average of about 10 per year. Large as that number may seem, it is tiny compared to what will come if the ruling class succeeds in getting all its legislative, judicial, administrative and propaganda processes in order. At the current rate of death sentences, the number of executions will have to rise to around 500 per year just to keep the death row population from swelling further.

The ruling class and its apparatus of repression are not quite ready to implement their intent to the extent of such mass murder yet. The desire to downplay the reality of ritual killing was evidenced by the recent ruling of a San Francisco federal court judge upholding California's ban on televising executions. The stated rationale for his decision was sensitivity to the San Quentin warden's claim that such coverage might cause unrest in the already maximum security prison in a state that has already built massive lockdown capacity to enable it to control unrest. No, it is not unrest inside that the ruling class fears, but that revulsion at a horrific reality might breed resistance to developing the means to control unrest without. ∞

"60 Minutes" Lances BOP Health Services — Stuff Comes Out

by Tim Blunk

Marion's Health Services took some well-deserved and long-overdue heat from the camera lights on a recent CBS *60 Minutes* segment examining abuses within the BOP's health care system. The Mar/17 program was titled "That's the Law", reflecting the tone of interviewer's Steve Kroft's intro — an apologetic bow to society's vengeful attitude towards prisoners. "You may think prisoners should be left to rot in their cells but the law says they're supposed to receive health care commensurate with that afforded to the community." Fortunately, once they got past this obligatory nod to the right, the show got down to it.

60 Minutes examined the case studies of three prisoners in the clutches of the feds. Steve Kroft couldn't interview Isabelle Suarez. She died of a coma following multiple epileptic seizures in the Chicago MCC after the pigs confiscated her medication upon her arrival. Another prisoner on the floor called 911 on the prison payphone or she would have died in her cell. The pigs thought she was faking.

Former prisoner Ronnie Holley thought the horror stories about the prison hospital in Springfield, MO were just more tales on the tier until he was mutilated by a Springfield surgeon performing an operation for removal of growths on his penis and in his lower abdomen. The butcher who did the job was unqualified to perform this kind of surgery. Proving the truism that scum rises to the top, Leland Wetzel was promoted to Chief of Surgery at Springfield. As "compensation" the feds released Holley early on his 5-year sentence for false statements.

The third case, that of anti-imperialist political prisoner Dr. Alan Berkman is probably familiar to ***PNS/Marionette*** readers. Alan is himself an M.D. — a happenstance that saved his life — and a former Marion prisoner. While on trial in Philadelphia in 1985, Alan discovered lumps in his armpits which turned out to be Hodgkin's disease, a form of lymphatic cancer. The BOP and US Marshalls said he had to go to Springfield. A humane judge ruled otherwise citing the evidence produced by Berkman's attorneys showing that Springfield was not equipped for the diagnosis or treatment of this relatively rare cancer. Instead Alan was treated in a cancer institute in Philadelphia and the cancer went into remission. Following his trial, the BOP designated Alan to USP Marion over the judge's orders, in spite of the fact that he was being sent there straight from the court (didn't they say they never did that?) and that there was a danger of recurrence of cancer which required supervision by a specialist. Instead, Alan got a chance to meet Dr. Valles, Marion's only, and unlicensed, physician. Alan described their encounter for *60 Minutes* : "For 10 years, the only doctor at Marion prison has been an unlicensed general practitioner... He has no license to practise medicine... The first time he saw me, he asked me what blood tests should he order. What X-rays he should order and would I examine the X-rays." Kroft then asked, "What do you think your condition would be if you weren't a doctor?" "I think I'd be dead," replied Berkman.

The cancer did recur, although lucky for Alan, he detected it while on trial once again in Washington, D.C. And again, litigation and a major mobilization including letters from Congressmen, religious figures and health professionals were needed to pre-empt a transfer to Springfield for "treatment". The pressure worked and Alan was treated at a hospital in D.C. and he's now recovering at the other federal prison hospital affiliated with the Mayo clinic in Rochester, MN — the institution to which the feds refused to send him when the cancer recurred.

60 Minutes missed it, but in Berkman's second battle over a transfer to Springfield, his attorneys learned that Springfield does not even have a board-certified oncologist (cancer specialist) on its staff. This is bad news indeed for the scores of prisoners treated there for cancer every year. Incredibly also, there are no physicians present at the hospital after 4:00 P.M. daily and none anytime on the weekends. A prisoner experiencing a sudden crisis must depend on a guard to get a Physician's Assistant (P.A.) to get him to an outside hospital in time. This usually means waging a campaign from the bunk in your isolation cell — something you're not always up to when you're slipping into shock. Springfield, described by *60 Minutes* as the flagship of the BOP's health care system, flies the "Jolly Roger".

Prisoners around the country fear Marion. Marion prisoners fear Springfield. Marion prisoners who by and large have collectively endured the worst holes, seg units and most inhuman conditions found in U.S. prisons are virtually unanimous in proclaiming Springfield as the worst time you can do with the feds — sick or not. The only blessing that comes with being a Marion prisoner at Springfield is that because they're so uptight about "security" they won't hold you there any longer than necessary to abuse your human right to decent health care. You'll likely avoid the Ulyssian voyage by bus or airlift from one prison (always the hole) to another — what is known at "Diesel Therapy".

Other *60 Minutes* highlights: Watching BOP Health Services director Dr. Kenneth Moritsugu become visibly unglued on camera was especially rewarding. Then, too, there was BOP Grand Poobah, Michael Quinlan himself, who dutifully defended the indefensible with the repetitive chant: "You can't condemn the whole system with just one case. . ." or four or five more it seemed until Steve Kroft tired of pulling the dummy's string.

That's not to say that the BOP health care system is devoid of competent, caring professionals. *60 Minutes* deployed their investigative team and did manage to find two, both of whom were driven out of Springfield for seeing prisoners as human beings deserving of decent care. Dr. Dante Landucci, now working at the BOP detention center in L.A. said, "I think that the physicians at Springfield felt much the same way as some of the (CBS) audience may, and that is, 'These are felons. Why are we worrying? Why are we wasting money? Why are we expending resources?'" Dr. Patty Allbright followed, "I wouldn't want to be taken care of by the doctors at Springfield. To call them 'substandard' — I think they don't care very much about the patients...! There were some people who would label me an 'inmate lover' because I tried to take standard medical care." The exceptions proved the rule: at Springfield it might not be a shot of benzene in the heart that awaits you *a la* Josef Megele but incompetence and uncaring butchers can kill you just as dead. If Marion prisoners especially are just another form of toxic waste, at Springfield we become just a more plentiful variety of dissection corpses — and there's no one standing over these doctors' shoulders grading their work.

Quinlan tried to blow off Berkman's case by saying that the fact that he's alive is the proof positive that in the BOP, prisoners' health care is just peachy. But anyone who followed Alan's case knows that what Alan said at the end of his interview is true: "I have gotten decent medical care, but not from the federal prison system — **in spite of** the federal prison system." The BOP, the U.S. Marshalls and U.S. Attorneys conspired to use a lethally abusive system to kill him. This specific agenda may not be in place for all prisoners but none of this bodes well for those of us inside who blew our finals at Harvard Medical School or who run across the good fortune of outside legal and political support **and** a court trip outside of federal jurisdiction when we get sick.

One piece of good news: the BOP apparently told Dr. Valles to go out and get his medical license. We're planning a party for him. ∞

Transcripts are available from: "60 Minutes", CBS News, 524 W. 57th St, New York, NY. Ask for Volume XX111, Number 27, the program dated Mar/17/91. Cost is $4.00.

May 13th Remembered

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

It has been six years now since the massacre; six years since the carnage on Osage Avenue; six years since an urban holocaust which stole 11 human lives; six years since the unjust encagement of Ramona Africa, for daring to survive; six years since the government committed premeditated mass murder of members of the Africa Family — men, women and children . . .and still, justice is a ghostly illusion.

To date, no judge, no jury, no judicial nor law enforcement officer has condemned the May 13th bombing of MOVE; in fact, several, including former U.S. Attorney Edwin Meese and Los Angeles police chief, Daryl Gates, have applauded it.

For over 17 years now, I have written of the ongoing battles between MOVE and this system. I have seen every substantive so-called constitutional right twisted, shredded and torn, when it came to MOVE; since the early 1970s I have seen male and female MOVE members, beaten 'til bloody and bones broken, locked beneath the jails, caged while pregnant, beaten into miscarriage, starved by municipal decree, sentenced to a century in prisons, homes demolished, by bomb, by crane, by cannon, by fire — but I've never seen them broken!

Throughout this vicious state campaign, the government, the prosecutors, the police, the courts have one central aim — renounce MOVE! Renounce your allegiance to **John Africa!** and we'll leave you alone. This has been proven.

In 1978 a phalanx of 500 heavily-armed cops laid siege to MOVE headquarters in Powelton Village, in an alleged attempt to enforce a civil eviction order. During the shootin a cop was killed and all adult MOVE members inside were charged with murder.

Before trial, two women told investigators they would resign from the organization even though they too were arrested inside the house. All charges, including murder, were dropped! At trial, nine MOVE men and women were convicted of third degree murder, all were sentenced to 30 to 100 years in prison. The May 13th, 1985 action was an attempt to draw attention to the earlier injustice suffered by MOVE members and demand their release.

As to their innocence, one need go no further than the trial judge of the August 8th case, who told listeners of the popular Frank Ford talk show, just days after their conviction, that he hadn't the "faintest idea" who killed the cop, adding, "They were tried as a family — so I convicted them as a family!" MOVE members then were convicted of **being MOVE members!** Had Ramona Africa emerged from the sea of flames wrapped in fear, had she not instead escaped with her aura of resistance intact, she would be free today.

Liberation News Service

Her prosecutor, describing MOVE as a "cult of resistance", demanded the jury convict her of a range of charges that, if they did so, would've exposed her to over 50 years in prison. Only her naturalist faith, **the teachings of John Africa,** allowed her to competently defend herself, where she beat the majority of charges.

Ramona, eligible for parole (like other MOVE members) over five years ago, is held today **solely** upon her refusal to renounce her teaching and her family, MOVE.

The muted public response to the mass murder of MOVE members some six years ago has set the stage for a higher level of acceptable state violence against radicals, against Blacks, and against all those deemed socially unacceptable.

In the '60s and '70s, the Black Panther Party defined the relationship between the police and the Black community as one between an occupying army and a colony. The confrontations between MOVE and this system's armed domestic forces has given that claim credence.

Quite recently, an article in the *Village Voice* quoted an anonymous white cop giving his prescription for bringing "law and order" to Los Angeles;

Cop 1: "You want to fix this city? I say you start out with carpet-bombing, level some buildings, plow all this shit under and start all over again.

Cop 2: Christ, you'd drop a bomb on a community?

Cop 3: Oh yeah, there'd be some innocent people, but not that many. There's just some areas of L.A. that can't be saved."

The twisted mentalities at work here are akin to those of Nazi Germany or perhaps more appropriately, of My Lai, of Viet Nam, of Baghdad –the spirit behind the mindlessly murderous mantra that echoed out of Da Nang –"We had to destroy the village, in order to 'save' it." As abroad, so here at home, for as the flames smothered life on Osage Avenue, police and politicians spoke of "destroying the neighbourhood" surrounding the MOVE house, in order to "save" it.

Now just six years later, cops patrol neighborhoods across America, armed like stormtroopers, with a barely disguised urge, to destroy the very area they are sworn to "serve and protect" — or perhaps we should say "sever and dissect?" As they sit and sup and smoke, what animates their mind? Are they an aid to the people or a foreign army of occupation?

May 13th, 1985 should've answered that question decisively. MOVE founder John Africa, wrote over a decade ago:

> *It is past time for all poor people to release themselves from the deceptive strangulation of society, realize that society has failed you, for to attempt to ignore this system of deception now is to deny you the need to protect this failure later, this system has failed you yesterday, failed you today and has created the conditions for failure tomorrow, for society is wrong, the system is reelin', the courts of this complex are filled with imbalance, cops are insane, the judges enslavin', the lawyers are just as the judges they confront, they are Harvard and Princeton and Cornell and Yale and trained as the judge to deceive the impoverished, trained as the judge to protect the established, trained by the system to be as the system, to do for the system, exploit with the system and MOVE ain't gonna close our eyes to this monster ...*

John Africa, "The Judge's Letter."

It was true then — it's even truer now. This system has failed all of us. Indeed, it is the problem! Organize, this very day, to resist it, to oppose it, to go beyond it. Demand that all imprisoned MOVE members be released and all political prisoners be freed!

That is a beginning. That is a first step we can take today!

Ona Move!
Long Live John Africa!

Mumia Abu-Jamal #M8335
Drawer R
Huntington, PA 16652

As most of our readers will know, Mumia Abu-Jamal is the only political prisoner on death row in the United States. We must keep the pressure up to prevent his execution (and all executions) from happening. Please see the back cover of this issue for the latest appeal on his behalf. Send him your solidarity. Letters to him will also let the prison officials know that there are many people paying attention to this case. And keep sending cards and letters to Governor Casey. His address in on the back cover: ∞

"A Prison Within A Prison" — The Special Handling Unit at Saskatchewan Penitentiary

by Richard Martel

The Special Handling Unit (S.H.U.) of Saskatchewan Penitentiary is situated in a small town named Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. It is actually a "prison within a prison," as there is a "main joint", just a "plain Maximum" surrounded by a 35 foot wall. Within that wall, somewhere in a forgotten corner by a watchtower, is a smaller building, which in itself is completely separated and autonomous, and that is the S.H.U., with a maximum warehousing of 80 prisoners.

Upon your arrival you immediately feel the difference, the tension and the total oppression. You're thoroughly stripped of all your personal belongings, given a set of dark green overalls about three sizes too big, handcuffed and sent on your way with no less than four guards towards a totally cleaned out cell where, for the next seven days, you will remain under close observation with no reading material, no personal belongings, no nothing. All there is left to do is pace, sleep and wonder in what kind of hole you've ended up.

Similar to USP Marion, what is visible to the public or prisoners from the "main joint" is a gleaming, modern prison that conveys an impression of cool and deliberate efficiency in the maintenance of rules and order toward some of the "worst" prisoners in Canada. There are "only" two S.H.U.s in Canada, the above mentioned and one in Quebec. I was only a "temporary resident" at Saskatchewan Pen's S.H.U., but the experience has left deep, permanent scars and wounds that are not visible at first look.

Saskatchewan Pen's S.H.U. is operated under a four phase system:

Phase 1:

Placed there upon arrival. Prisoners are forced to spend a minimum of 30 days with an average of 23 hours a day locked in single cells. One hour per day out of cell, alone, in a yard no bigger than a softball diamond. No work. Very limited self-study schooling, No hobbies permitted. Meals in cells.

Phase 2:

Prisoners are forced to spend a minimum of 90 days with an average of 21 hours a day locked in single cells. One and a half hours per day out in a yard the same size as in Phase 1, (every other day, the yard time is replaced by gym time with very limited access to exercise equipment), and one and a half hours per day out in a common room to play cards, talk with others or watch TV. No more than eight prisoners together at any given time anywhere out of the cells. Very limited work. Limited self-study education in cells. Some hobbies permitted in cells. Meals are served in cells.

Phase 3:

Prisoners are forced to spend a minimum of one year with an average of 18 hours a day locked in single cells. Two hours per day — rain or shine — out in a yard approximately three times bigger than for the previous two phases. Breakfast is served in cells. Lunch and dinner are served in the range common room. The rest of the time (approximately three hours) can be spent either in the common room or at the gym. No more than 16 prisoners can be together at any given time, anywhere out of the cells. Work is limited. Self-study education is limited. Hobbies are permitted in cells. Access to hobby shop is permitted during gym hours.

Phase 4:

After spending "usually" a minimum of 2 years in S.H.U, following "good behavior", Phase 4 comes into effect. You are then transferred to a "normal" penitentiary where you will remain for no less than one year under a kind of "probationary term." In other words, if, at any given time, the administrative heads feel you are a threat to the good order of the institution, you will then be returned to the S.H.U with a "brand new start" in Phase 1.

Note:

I have personal knowledge of prisoners who spent over 5 years in Phase 3 alone.

I was very "lucky" as I spent "only" 13 months in that place. Following pages of allegations, suspicions and irregularities, plus the work of two lawyers, I was "allowed" to go back to my prior institution. Lawsuit action is pending with possible obscure results, but. . .!!!

For the duration of their "stay" prisoners have the "privilege" of an education consisting of no more than one correspondence course at a time while at university level education, which is largely obstructed by poor access to telephone in order to discuss some points with an unknown tutor, and up to three courses while at high school level or lower education. Access to the library is very

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The Prison News Service is published bimonthly by PSC Publishers, and edited by the Bulldozer Collective. It is always free to prisoners. (U.S. postage, 40 cents to Canada.) For outsiders, subscriptions are by donation, recommended $10.00/yr, more if you Can, less if you can't. Donations are needed to keep this project going. Prison support groups can order multiple copies for costs of postage. And such groups should consider sending us regular amounts of money if you think this project is worthwhile.
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Sacred Circle Social

The following is an introductory talk welcoming outsiders to a Native Brotherhood social at the federal prison in Renous, New Brunswick.

Greetings to you all and welcome to this gathering of the Sacred Circle Society. As the council member chosen by my peers to deal with public relations, I've been given the honour of making the opening remarks. To begin with we'd like to thank all of you for coming here today, for taking the time out of your lives to be a part of ours. We know that some of you have travelled long distances to be a part of this gathering and we'd like each of you to know we appreciate the sacrifices you've made and the generosity you've shown for us.

There have been many times during the past two months when we weren't sure whether or not we'd be having this gathering. The usual administrative racists and bureaucratic morons who inhabit the belly of this beast seemed to be working overtime to see that it failed.

The concept of this institution is "cost effectiveness" and what that means is they don't mind failure of programs as long as they can save money on it. But, true to all government agencies, these people are more than willing to spend thousands on manpower, if it means they'll save a few dollars by cutting a Native program or any program that doesn't agree with their version of reality. If this sounds familiar, that's only because it is. The similarities are there because we're dealing with the same system; we're simply a small slice of the same pie.

One of the things we tell the fakers in here when they ask us what it's like to be an Indian in jail is for them to spend a few days on this side of the fence. Anyone who's done time in jail — whether they know it or not — knows what it is like to be an Indian in Kanada. The same mentality in here that tells us when to wake up, when to sleep, when to eat, when to work, where we'll live and who will represent us in matters of spirituality as well as group activities, is the same mentality that tells you where your land is, what laws you'll obey, who they'll recognize as your representatives. The same mentality that wants to interfere in every aspect of your lives out there is the same mentality we deal with in here. The only difference is in the matter of degree.

Tyranny is a word used to describe a political regime based on subordination of the individual to the state and strict control of all aspects of life by coercive measures. All institutions are tyrannical in nature, and this one is no different: if we don't follow the rules and regulations, or obey every standing order and commissioner's directive — regardless of how arbitrary or capricous they are; if we refuse to follow or abide by the administration's interpretation of how we will practice our spirituality — then the power of the state is brought to bear on us: They harass the group, they "forget" to process paperwork or "lose" proposals we've submitted.

They charge us for minor infractions and have us placed in the hole. They segregate us for months and sometimes years, which means that we spend 23 hours-a-day in our cells away from the general population. They systematically violate our Sacred Ways and claim ignorance for their acts of stupidity. And all of this is done in the name of "rehabilitation". Rehabilitation to us has become synonomous with phrases like "doctrine of discovery" and "manifest destiny" and no member of our group wants to be rehabilitated in that sense.

Out where you people have come from the word for tyranny is democracy. This basically means that the majority have the right to oppress a minority, especially if the minority in question are the caretakers of Turtle Island. Out there, if you people don't follow the rules and regulations, the arbitrary laws imposed by a foreign government, or reject the intrusion into your lives by a people who cry foul whenever their lives are intruded upon, then the power of the state is brought to you in the form of program cuts and other economic sanctions. It's brought to bear in terms of exclusion from participation in decisions that directly affect your lives. And as we saw last summer at Oka with the Mohawks, in terms of bringing military might in the form of thousands of troops and artillery against a Nation that was doing nothing more than defending the Sacred land of their ancestors.

There isn't a member of this group who wouldn't have liked to be there to stand by our Mohawk brothers and sisters in their time of need. No one wants to die, but to stand and fight for our ancestors and our children is both an honour and an obligation we have as members of our Native Nations. We're proud of our Elders and friends who made the journey to Oka, to Kahnawake and Kahnasatake to show their support in whatever way they could for the people there. We're proud of those leaders of many nations across Turtle Island who had the courage to stand up and voice their support for the Mohawks as well as demonstrate their disgust at the lies and manipulations of both the federal and provincial governments.

So we're glad the Creator wanted us all to be here today to celebrate our past, present and future leaders. In the next two days we will celebrate them with words and prayers; with our songs and dances; and with our sweetgrass and Sacred tobaccos.

Remembering our leaders of the past in song and dance keeps them alive in the spirit place of their Nations. Remembering their deeds for our people helps us to remember that we have obligations to defend the Sacred ways they lived and died for against all who seek to destroy these teachings.

We will celebrate our present day leaders who follow the traditional path and show us by the example of their lives how we must aspire to become free of our dependencies and return to the Red Road so that we might become examples for our future generations.

We celebrate our leaders from within the ironhouses who've stood up for their Brothers and Sisters and who've fought with the administrations across Turtle Island for the right to practice our Sacred Ways. We celebrate our future leaders, some of whom may be with us today. No one knows the course of history or who will be chosen by events to play a part in changing its course: Who among us knew that the course of history in relations between Native peoples and government would be changed forever when a group of Mohawks first decided they weren't going to allow the desecration of a Sacred burial ground by the Quebec government? Or that the nickname of a construction worker visiting his mother would become a household word for his actions in the defence of Mohawk sovereignty. Events choose the leaders in those situations and events will choose the true leaders of the future for our people.

All we can do is practice our teachings, listen to our Elders and follow the Red Road. By doing these things we will always be ready to accept a leadership role for our people should events choose any of us to change the course of history. If these things don't come to pass for us, then perhaps they will come to pass for those who grow up around us and follow the examples we must set for them. ∞

New Jersey Prisoners Under Attack

by Jim Campbell

The Afrikan National Ujamaa (ANU), a Pan Afrikan Nationalist group that has been educating and organizing black prisoners in New Jersey for several years, is under full attack by the state of New Jersey. Last summer the state prison administration and guards blamed the ANU for two major disturbances which left many guards injured. (On May/30/91, seven prisoners at Trenton were indicted for allegedly attempting to murder three guards, as well as 14 counts of aggravated assault on seven injured guards. They could face an additional 50-100 years. See *PNS* #28) The immediate cause of the incidents in which black prisoners fought it out with white guards was ongoing racial and political harassment. In retaliation, suspected leaders of the ANU were exiled to other state prison systems as far away as Oregon. Other prisoners were sent to the Management Control Unit (MCU) or into the notorious VROOM Readjustment Unit, a control unit used as punishment. There was the usual round of beatings and destruction of personal property that one can expect any time prisoners act to protect themselves in a collective manner. Attempts are still being made to charge ANU people who were in the MCU at the time with responsibility for the "attacks" on the guards even though the MCU is completely cut off from general population.

Recent developments suggest that the state is not content to leave the repression up to the outside courts, or their own kangaroo internal courts. On May/9/91, Dinard Pinkney was arrested in Philadelphia after he had allegedly purchased weapons and explosives from an undercover cop. According to the media, the police had set up the purchase after an informant in Trenton State Prison told authorities of a planned escape involving automatic weapons and explosives that was linked to Pinkney's brother-in-law, William Stovall, being held at the state prison. In spite of protest by Ajamu U. Kafele, one of the founders of the ANU, that Stovall was not part of the ANU, the police insisted that he was an active member and that Pinkney was a minor player in the group.

In the last week of May, Hatari Wahaki was arrested for allegedly possessing an assortment of "escape" tools, including wire cutters, needle nose pliers, an ice pick, a screw driver and a set of vise-grips. They were "found" in the insulation cavity of an ice cooler in Wahaki's cell in the VROOM Readjustment Unit. Again the authorities said that the search was conducted after they had received information from an informant that an escape was being planned. Wahaki was transferred to the MCU. Wahaki's involvement with the ANU was also played up.

The prison officials were also suggesting that some staff members were negligent or criminally involved in getting the "escape tools" to Wahaki. One can understand the attempt at "logic", since Wahaki can't just pick up the tools at the local hardware store. But considering that the whole matter seems like a set-up from the beginning, it raises the possibility that some of the black guards, or other staff, are being targetted as well. At the time of the major confrontation last July, black guards shielded a group of African prisoners from white guards seeking to extract revenge for the thumping they had just taken. An internal report confirmed that there had been a stand-off between the two groups of guards along racial lines. While VROOM is physically separated from the main body of the Trenton State Prison, it is nonetheless likely that the tensions between the white and black guards carry over to the VROOM unit.

In both instances, the ANU was linked in the media to the Black Liberation Army (BLA), a group which developed out of the Black Panthers and which waged armed resistance during the '70s and the early '80s. The BLA had several shoot-outs with the police, including one with the NJ state police in which Assata Shakur was wounded and captured, and Zayd Malik Shakur was killed along with one of the (storm) troopers. Assata was later freed from a state prison when four armed comrades went for a short visit. In spite of denials by the ANU that they are connected to the BLA, the media reports made repeated references to just such a connection. It serves as further evidence that the ANU, according to corrections officials, is "terroristic in nature" and "violence prone".

The ANU is one of the new generation of radical prisoner groups to emerge in the last few years. To prison officials, a politically and socially conscious organization with an ability to reach other prisoners, to educate, to help develop a sense of dignity and self-worth is more dangerous to the smooth running of the prisons than the existence of the usual prison gangs. The gangs, with their focus on power, on turf, on drugs and money, are easily understood by the bureaucrats. Their existence is often tolerated as a means of keeping the prison functioning. And there is always the hole or the control units for any of them who get too far out of line.

But a political group that shows any sign of gaining strength will be met with severe reprisals. The authorities are able to draw on their years of experience in attacking groups such as the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement. One of the most effective tools is to link any such group in the public mind with violence and, more recently with

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AIDS in Canadian Prisons

Some Policies Can Not Wait!

by Zoltan Lugosi

The role of prisoner is not an easy one and there is no school that teaches people how to do time. Neither does the system of corrections provide adequate programs to help prisoners develop more positive attitudes and lifestyles in order for them to adapt to society. Therefore, it is left to prisoners to learn, and misconceptions and misinterpretations are maintained. These ill-informed beliefs include the widely misunderstood illness of HIV/AIDS. While there is a need to re-evaluate the concepts of rehabilitation, a more urgent need is the education of prisoners and prison staff regarding the facts, prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

People fail to realize the scope of the crisis. AIDS kills, and it kills slowly and painfully. To date there is no cure but there are means of prevention and there are treatments to improve and prolong life once a person has an HIV infection. Without education and the means of prevention, HIV infection will become an epidemic in prisons as it already is in some communities. Without education about treatment and access to proper medical care, AIDS will result in enormous suffering in prisons, much of it avoidable and unnecessary.

Although there are more ways to get this elusive virus, unprotected sexual intercourse and sharing needles are the two most common. No matter one's moral point of view, no matter what laws are proclaimed, people will continue to have sex and shoot up. And Canadian prisons are merely a statistical microcosm of society.

HIV/AIDS is not confined to the IV drug user or gay communities. A recent University of Toronto study of newborns "revealed that the rate of the virus is three times higher than expected." The study suggests that the HIV virus is "spreading dangerously among women of child-bearing age." As of September, 1990 "fifty-six children in Canada" have contracted HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, there are an estimated 4,500 AIDS cases and 30,000 to 50,000 cases of HIV infection among Canadians (and most likely more than less). Without specific testing, the real figures will never be known.

Finally recognizing that HIV/AIDS will not simply go away and will remain a growing concern, Parliament commissioned the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on AIDS in 1989. In June of 1990, that Committee made fifty recommendations on HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention and education, including five very specific recommendations that targeted the captive populations of prisons. These recommendations include "that the Solicitor General begin as soon as possible to implement the recommendations of NAC-AIDS [National Action Committee-AIDS]... for the prevention of HIV transmissions in prisons", and, in particular, to make available bleach and condoms to inmates, to make a pilot study to assess the level of infection in federal prisons, to provide funding for community groups to mount AIDS education and awareness programs in prison, and to undertake a study of the advantages of prison health care services being provided by outside agencies. The Committee's report, *Confronting A Crisis*, noted U.S. prison statistics which "show that 18 to 28% of populations engage in unprotected sexual activity and 50% of inmates may be involved in drug use and that sharing of needles is common.

Federal Health and Welfare Minister Perrin Beatty and his department quickly responded to the various Parliamentary committee recommendations with a national AIDS strategy presented as a two-part plan, *HIV and AIDS: Canada's Blueprint and Building an Effective Partnership: The Federal Government's Commitment to Fighting AIDS*. This plan calls for the development of policies, programs and activities for AIDS education, treatment and prevention. Although the Guiding Principles claim that "everyone must be involved [and] no substantial achievement can be realized unless full cooperation exists between Canadians, governments at all levels as well as AIDS service organizations, persons living with AIDS, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, community groups, researchers, healthcare and social service providers, the private sector and labour organizations", the plan completely ignores the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations concerning prisons, prisoners and prison staff. And this in spite of the fact that Mr. Beatty himself made a point of touring Canadian prisons in 1985 as Solicitor-General and he is well aware of conditions.

Confronted by the Canadian AIDS Society about the omission of prisons as a special target area in his AIDS strategy, Perrin Beatty responded "that direct action to fight the spread of AIDS in prison requires the cooperation of the Solicitor-General, who apparently is not convinced there is a problem." Officials believe that because sex and drugs are proscribed in prison, the problems of HIV/AIDS do not exist.

Canadians are certainly not unfamiliar with Parliamentary Commissions. They are set up to address specific crises and normally seek the guidance and advice of the public and private sectors. As a result, many professional recommendations are made and, over the years, many reports containing worthwhile solutions and conclusions and results have been compiled. Several of these commissions addressed specific concerns within the Corrections System of Canada. For example, the recent Daubney Commissions reported its findings and recommendations in an extensive paper, *Taking Responsibility*, regarding parole and other aspects of the justice system, including the myths and realities of prisons. Millions of tax dollars pay for these reports, papers continue to pile up, but the reports made by experts from various fields fall on deaf ears. Having studied the Swackhammer Inquiry, the report of the Daubney Commission and the Pepino Inquiry and having experienced the conditions of various Canadian penitentiaries, I can assure you that the recommendations made concerning very real crisis situations have not been put into effect.

The Correctional Services of Canada's mandate is first and foremost to protect society. That does not necessarily mean that the public safety is ensured simply because offenders are locked away in prisons. Whether or not people believe it, prisoners are eventually released and inmates of institutions do have basic rights. To deny prisoners their rights, or to deny offenders the opportunity to lead positive and healthy lifestyles within prison or community settings, does nothing to protect society. The high rates of recidivism in Canada reflect this. And it is fact that, with the exception of the United States, Canada has the highest rate of prisoners per capita in the first world. Because inmates will be released at one time or another, they must be educated about HIV/AIDS and given the means to protect themselves from it or there is a very real threat of HIV/AIDS transmission into the community at large. To deny prison inmates explicit education, the opportunity to protect themselves, or the specialized medical care they require is a direct contradiction of the mandate of CSC, and the Mission Statement, a federally released statement on the goals and objectives of prisons, isn't worth the paper it is printed on.

However, governments are beginning to feel the heat from the Canadian public who no longer want reports or "Mission Statements". They want to see the necessary action to enact and realize needed policies. And no matter how much people claim that policy and legislation are Cabinet matters, it is and always will be public pressure which initiates action. Nevertheless, it seems that every issue, whether social, economic or whatever, gets bogged down in political and bureaucratic processes and people continue to suffer because of rhetoric and inaction. But some things can not just wait. HIV/AIDS can not/will not wait for the politicians to make up their minds. Canadians must act now.

Some Canadians, besides the prisoners, have recognized the urgent need to deal with the HIV/AIDS epidemic in prisons. A coalition of AIDS activists, ACT UP MONTREAL recently formed a Prisoners Rights Committee. Recognizing that Canada's National AIDS Strategy included nothing for prisoners, they have unleashed their power in effective direct action. This has taken the form of a demonstration and an outreach program. On Prisoner's Justice Day in 1990, they demonstrated outside the Federal Health and Welfare Department's offices in Montreal and were granted an audience with Health and Welfare representatives who explained that prisons are the responsibility of the Solicitor-General, not Health and Welfare. ACT UP MONTREAL remains determined to bring attention to the AIDS crisis in prisons through government enactment of policies that will address HIV/AIDS—education, prevention, and treatment.

Prevention:

After hearing volumes of expert testimony, the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on AIDS stated: "There is undoubtedly a high incidence of risk behaviour [in Canadian prisons]." It is obvious that the distribution of condoms and bleach (to disinfect needles) will only make what is already happening safer. Corrections officials are adamant that this practice will only encourage sex and drugs, but that is another myth and a simple denial of what goes on in their institutions. As punishment has never been a deterrent for crime, neither is the threat of contracting HIV/AIDS a deterrent for drugs and sexual activity. And prison policy mostly based on security measures, includes nothing to address the wide-spread panic, cell-block disturbances and the erosion of correctional budgets that are, and will be, a result of the lack of HIV/AIDS education. By denying that there is an HIV/AIDS problem in Canadian prisons, prison administrators are only frustrating the efforts of community groups who express their concern and desire to be involved in prison programs.

Treatment:

Prisoners with HIV/AIDS need alternatives to segregation. We have learned that this deadly infection is not as readily communicable as once believed, so there is no need to isolate prisoners with HIV/AIDS or treat them substantially different from the general prison population. There is, however, an urgent need for sensitivity to these prisoners' feelings and health requirements—they are facing certain death and need to cope with grief and other emotional problems. They know that without the specialized medical attention which they will not receive in a Canadian prison, they are facing terrible physical suffering. Strangely enough, there is more fear among prison staff than inmates—some seem to think they will carry AIDS home on their shoes. Dying of AIDS is painful enough. To have to endure death in isolation among people who are afraid of, and therefore hostile towards, persons with AIDS is a violation of basic human rights.

Education:

While there is a need for films to educate prison workers, general populations of all prisons need explicit HIV/AIDS education presented by recognized community educators. Meanwhile, Narcotics Anonymous and substance abuse co-ordinators must be encouraged to include the facts on HIV/AIDS in their counseling. Because the real obstacle for prisoner involvement in HIV/AIDS programs is often homophobia, there is a need for proper presentation of these programs, if only to convince prisoners that the most exposed are those who use, or have used, needles. And because inmates distrust prison authorities and are unlikely to discuss proscribed activities, peer groups and programs are the best approach. Inmate ingenuity ought to spread knowledge, not AIDS.

American prisoner rights activist David Gilbert, with the help of community groups and AIDS professionals, launched a prisoners' education project on HIV/AIDS at the Auburn Correctional Facility in New York. This eventually led to his involuntary transfer to the highest security (MAX A) institution in the state. But before Gilbert was shipped he was able to make some conclusions about his experiences of constant hassles and delays: "Thorough, consistent and ongoing peer education can make a big difference in the attitudes and practices of prisoners; there must be strong public pressure for such programs; there must be a powerful movement about AIDS to push the professionals to be true to their professed ideals and put the fight against AIDS above careerism. To be effective against AIDS, the movement must consciously oppose race, class, gender and sexual-orientation biases".

There is enough known about HIV/AIDS to dispel the myths. We know how to prevent it and, if not yet how to cure it, to make it a manageable chronic illness. And there is no doubt that we can teach others what we know. However, prison authorities and politicians refuse to recognize the crisis when confronted on their inaction. Their Commissions and recommendations and studies are only a continuation of their rhetoric. The studies have been done, the recommendations have been made, we need direct action now. ∞

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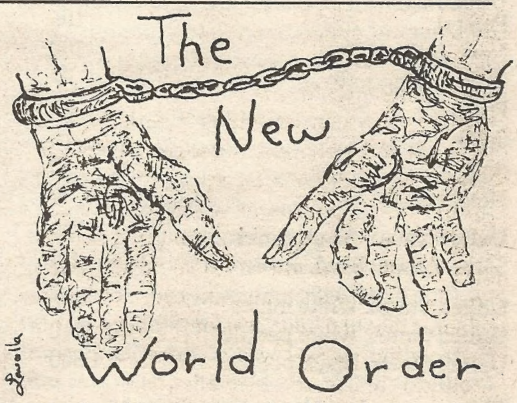
S.H.U. *continued from page 3*

limited. You have access once a week only, through request forms procedure, and a grand possibility of borrowing a maximum of three books. The only work available is as unit cleaners, for which 15 minutes is allowed at the end of each days' "activities".

Any and all movement to any part of the prison is done after a thorough "pat-down" search or a strip search — depending on the guards' mood — and always with hands cuffed. If one is going to see the doctor for any medical reasons, a body belt/chain is used as well. Any and all movement to and from any part of the prison is made under escort of a minimum of 4 to 6 guards, and under the surveillance of a minimum of two armed guards, constantly aiming their shot guns through the numerous gun portholes. Only one prisoner at a time moves from one place to another.

Contact with the community is discouraged and virtually non-existent. Visits are very restrictive, being permitted only through glass and via phones. Visitors are also subjected to mind games and stalling tactics; the oppressive character of visiting makes for relatively few visits. Mail is very closely censored and often rejected — if not lost — when it is not delayed.



Saskatchewan Penitentiary's S.H.U. is by many points extremely similar to USP Marion, and as stated by Bill Dunne in *New Studies on the Left*, Vol. XIV, pp 14-15: "Whatever integrity a prisoner is able to maintain, the tension and stress and anger and frustration and debilitation and resentment and other emotional load factors artificially and deliberately created do accumulate and do take some toll. Individuals may survive more or less intact, but not better for the experience." ∞

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The Crime of Black Imprisonment

by Steve Whitman

In his article in the March/April 1991 issue of *Bulldozer*, Bill Dunne reported on and analyzed some of the recent findings of the Sentencing Project. Bill, in his usual astute and exciting manner, discussed the enormous increase in imprisonment rates in the United States and pointed out that the U.S. is now number one in the world in terms of packing its prisons, having higher rates than the Soviet Union, higher even than South Africa.

What I would like to do in this article is continue the story, in part as I see it and in part by presenting additional data from the Sentencing Project. I would then like to try to draw some political lessons from the data.

The United States "Criminal" "Justice" System

The U.S. "criminal" "justice" system is the largest in the world. There are over 750,000 people in U.S. prisons, over 400,000 in jails, and more than 3.5 million people—or more than one percent of the U.S. population—who are under some form of criminal justice control (including prison, jail, probation and parole). It is difficult to grasp the enormity of these numbers. For example, the number of people in prison would comprise the 11th largest city in the U.S. The number of people who are incarcerated in jails or prisons is greater than the number of people who live in 13 states. The number of people under the control of the criminal justice system is larger than the number of people who live in Chicago or Nicaragua. In 1988, almost 14 million people were arrested in the U.S., and this is more than the number of people who live in many countries.

The Sentencing Project's Report

The Sentencing Project is an independent organization operating out of Washington D.C. (Its address is 918 F St, N.W., Suite 501, Washington, D.C. 20004). This report, entitled "Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration," was written by Marc Mauer, the assistant director of the organization. (Interestingly, several years ago Mauer authored an excellent pamphlet for the American Friends Service Committee entitled "The Lessons of Marion.")

Although incarceration rates are usually calculated by dividing the number of people in prison by the relevant population group, in this report Mauer uses the number of people in prison *and* jail . This makes it easier and more accurate to compare international rates since in some other countries distinctions aren't made, as they are in the U.S., between prisons and jails.

Among the rates Mauer computes are the following:

Country	Incarceration Rate per 100,000 Population, for 1989 or 1990
United States	426
South Africa	333
Soviet Union	268
Hungary	196
Poland	106
New Zealand	100
United Kingdom	97
France	81
Spain	76
Italy	60
Netherlands	40
United States: Black males	3,109
South Africa: Black males	729
United States: white males*	420
United States: white people*	210
United States: Black people*	1,500

(*I have calculated these three rates by using additional data sources. Incarceration rates for other national groupings in the U.S. present still other important issues. Due to limited space I will not discuss rates for other people of color in this aticle.)

It is important to examine closely the racial dynamics revealed in this table. Imprisonment rates for Black people are about 7.4 times higher than for white people. Indeed, the grotesque distinction of the U.S. having the highest imprisonment rate in the world stems from how the U.S. imprisons Black people. In fact, it is stunning to note that the incarceration rate for white people in the U.S. is about twice as high as the European rates *while the rate for Black people in the U.S. is four times as high as the rate for Black people in South Africa!*

Returning to the U.S.

We've examined the size of the U.S. prison system, international comparisons in incarceration rates, and the racial dynamics of these comparisons. Let's now return to the U.S. and look at the racial dimensions of the criminal justice system. There are many ways of expressing the horrors of Black imprisonment:

- as noted above, a Black person in the U.S. is 7.4 times more likely to be imprisoned than a white person;
- one out of every two Black men will be arrested in his lifetime;
- one out of every four Black men will go to prison in his lifetime;
- there are more Black men aged 20-29 who are under control of the criminal justice system than there are Black men in college;
- as you read this, one out of every four Black men are under some form of criminal justice control;
- as you read this, more than 3% of all Black men are in prison;

- although most (about 95%) prisoners are men, the racial differential for women is even greater than it is for men.

(And please note, that when it says prison above, it means only prison. That is, this category does not include jails, probation, parole, etc.)

Now, just stop to think what these numbers mean to the Black community. One out of every two Black men will be arrested in his lifetime; one out of every four will go to prison; and 3% are in prison at this very moment. It is not just that these people are gone from the community: their roles must be filled by others; many will return to the streets as damaged or even destroyed human beings; and whatever opportunities might have existed before incarceration will surely be gone for these "ex-cons." In short, these imprisonment numbers are an indication that an entire people is under extreme attack.

The Mainstream Media

Imprisonment is a major social problem in the U.S. While the entire social fabric is disintegrating (schools and hospitals are closing, housing is increasingly unavailable, jobs are disappearing, life expectancy for Black people is actually decreasing), the only budget items still being funded are tasks of destruction like prisons and war. In this context, even the mainstream media are forced to acknowledge that the bulging prison system is a problem.

This, however, certainly doesn't mean that the media will acknowledge the true nature of the problem. For example, in the past several years, the *New York Times* has printed several very long articles on some issues surrounding the rapidly expanding prison system. All of these uniformly, even studiously, fail to mention Black people. One of the articles contained 36 paragraphs but didn't mention any racial dynamic until the 35th paragraph, and then there was only a brief allusion to "minorities." Just a few months ago, a major article on imprisonment appeared in the most prestigious U.S. scientific journal, *Science*. The central question in the article was what accounts for the soaring imprisonment rate. There was almost no mention of Black imprisonment and its implications. Clearly, it is not to the advantage of the mainstream media to report accurately what is happening in prisons.

An Observation Based On the Imprisonment Rate

Imprisonment in the United States is thus an institution for Black people. If the U.S. as a whole had an imprisonment rate of about 200, the rate for white people, this would represent how the working class was treated by capital. It would be bad and it would be a situation that any humane person would want to fight against. But it would not be the qualitatively different phenomenon that is imprisonment in this country.

If 200 is a high rate for incarcerating members of the proletariat, then 1,500 must be something else. It would be inappropriate to pursue such a complicated topic here with so little space. But it seems to me that the qualitative difference in these rates must be dealt with if we are to come to an appropriate political understanding of the function of prisons in the U.S. One prominent explanation that many Black people, including many Black prisoners, put forward is that they are not a part of any "multinational working class" but that they are instead members of an oppressed nation. And some name this nation "New Afrika." (I agree with this national concept and for this reason spell Black with a capital B.)

Why Are the Imprisonment Rates So High?

Imprisonment rates in the U.S. were first compiled on a regular basis in 1925. From then until 1971, or for almost 50 years, the rates stayed more or less constant. Then in 1972 the rates started zooming upward and have not yet stopped. In fact, U.S. imprisonment rates have tripled in the past twenty years. What was happening around 1972 that might explain this upward spiral?

To begin with, the 1960's saw the birth and rise of groups such as the Black Panther Party (BPP), the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika, and the Black Liberation Army. The government viciously attacked the Black Liberation Movement, murdering many members of the BPP, people like Fred Hampton, Mark Clark and Bunchy Carter, and incarcerating dozens upon dozens of Black revolutionaries. According to one article, in the three years after J. Edgar Hoover's infamous COINTELPRO memorandum, dated August 25, 1967, nearly a thousand members of the BPP were arrested, key leaders were sent to jail, and 31 were murdered. Another author notes that the ACLU recorded 48 major police-Panther clashes in Chicago alone in 1969, and that "[T]he killings of Hampton and Clark brought the 1969 death toll of Panthers to 28, according to a *Newsweek* report in 1970." In that same year, police jailed or arrested 749 Panthers.

Perhaps the culminating acts of this period were the murder of George Jackson on August 21, 1971, and the great Attica prison rebellion on September 9

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ter Crime?

cluding this article, there is one other im-
n that I would like to address: Do prisons
may come as a surprise to many that
ne who has studied this question believes
not deter crime. I thought that a few quotes
t normally identified with readers of *Bull-*
appropriate here.

nel on Research on Deterrent and Incapaci-
s established to investigate the appropriate
n reducing the crime rate. After a meticu-
f the existing research and a great deal of
al research, the panel reported: "California
etts, for example, must increase their index
ons by over 150 percent and 310 percent, re-
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rough incapacitation. . . . Thus, policy sug-
upon the existing evidence, can only be
ear recognition of the inadequacy of the
rdingly, such suggestions must be very lim-
with great caution. . . . Policy makers in the
system are done a great disservice if they
e impression that the empirical evidence,
mselves are frequently unable to evaluate,
ts the deterrence hypothesis. Furthermore,
s ultimately undermine the credibility of
nce as inputs to public policy choices."

riminologist: "The results reported in the
n provide no reliable evidence that risk of
r time served has a measurable impact on
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ore report, "the National Academy of Sci-
summary of previous penal research, con-
tion should be exercised in interpreting the
nce as establishing a deterrent effect , and
r the sanction of imprisonment'."

, by another criminologist: "Incapacitation
been only slightly more effective in avert-
early 1980s than in the 1970s, despite a near
U.S. prison populations in less than ten

ota's Assistant Commissioner of Correc-
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t crime. We're in the business of tricking
king that spending hundreds of millions [of
prisons will make them safe."

rectional Association of New York: "The
licies have been staggeringly expensive,
a crisis of safety and manageability in the
and have failed to reduce the rate of crime
increase. After almost ten years of 'getting
zens of New York are more likely to be
today than in 1971. Moreover, the largest
ne at the end of the decade, during 1980-81,
troduction of more severe sentencing prac-

Bar Association's Task Force on Crime has
s no solid evidence to support the conclu-
ng more convicted offenders to prison for
f time deters others from committing crime."

tor of Corrections of Alabama understands
'We're on a train that has to be turned
n't make any sense to pump millions and
rrections and have no effect on the crime

Ve Make of All of This?

en that prisons incarcerate huge numbers
or, especially Black people. We have also
s do not deter crime. And certainly no one
r to believe that prisons rehabilitate people.
out that prisons are enormously expensive.
e entire budget for "justice system expendi-
ras $60 billion dollars. "Corrections expen-
ted for over $19 billion of this. (It has been
ll the children of the *world* could be fully
about one billion dollars.) Furthermore, it
000 a year to send a person to prison, about
ost to send that person to Harvard.

natural to ask, what is it that a system like
is its purpose. It seems to me that the most
anation, the one that best fits the facts, is
me kind of control mechanism for people of
m of counterinsurgency which has as its
l of preventing rebellion by people of color
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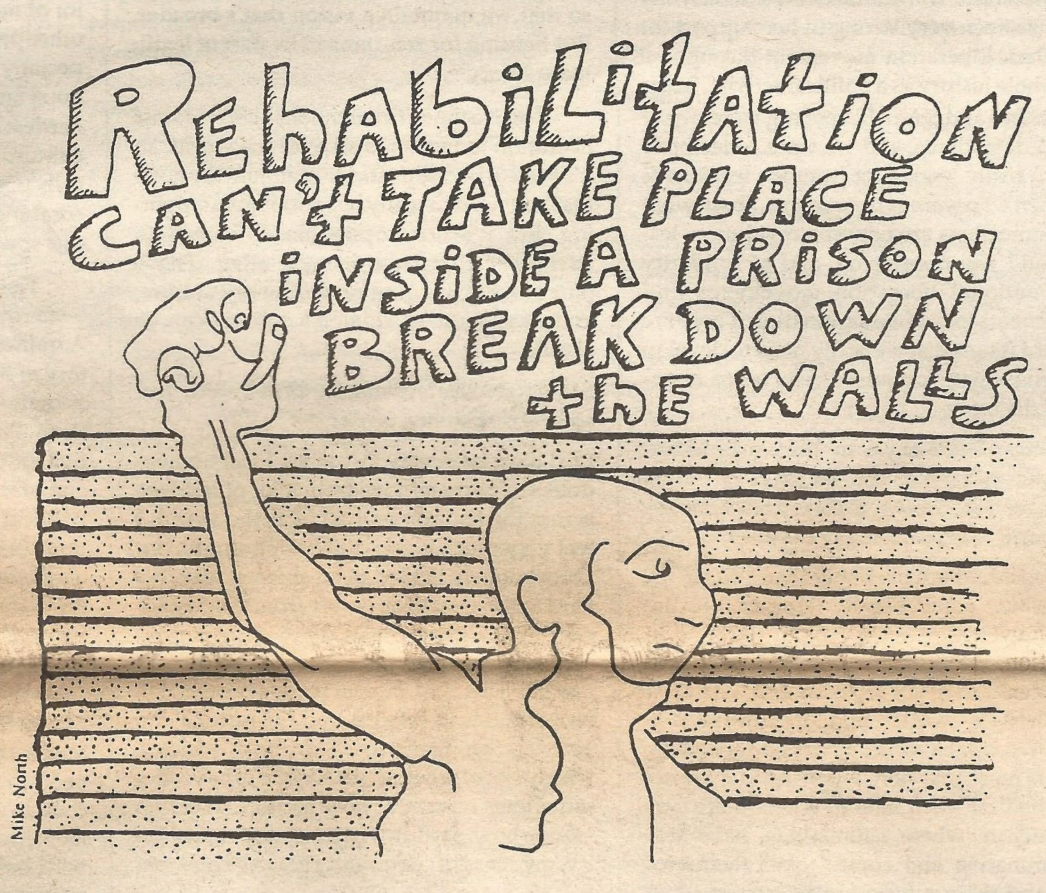
s a member of the Committee to End the Marion
d the Committee may be reached at P.O. Box
IL 60657-8172. ∞

Cons In Prose: Good and Bad

by Bill Dunne

"Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration", by Marc Mauer, Assistant Director of the Sentencing Project of Washington, DC was released in January 1991 and received attention in various national media. "America's Soaring Prison Population" by Patrick A. Langan, a statistician for the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice, was published in the prestigious journal *Science* in Mar/91. Mauer presented the draconian U.S. use of imprisonment as a gross aberration in the world and a failure needing change. Langan presented it as possibly responsible for reductions in crime and needing to be given weight in debates about prisons.



The Mauer report made several major findings. The U.S. has the highest known rate of incarceration in the world at 426 prisoners per hundred thousand population, including both prisons and jails. It was followed by South Africa and the Soviet Union (with 333 and 268 prisoners per hundred thousand) neither of which claim to be paradigms of freedom and democracy. Moreover, the U.S. prison population has more than doubled during the '80s while South Africa's increased only 19% and the Soviet Union's declined dramatically during the same period. Mauer also found that black males in the U.S. are imprisoned at over four times their imprisonment rate in South Africa, 3109 vs. 729 per hundred thousand. The cost of U.S. incarceration was found to be approximately $16-billion per year.

Langan focused only on prisoners in U.S. state prisons, exclusive of those in local jails and federal custody. His findings of record growth in incarceration resulting in a tripling of the prison population in only 16 years are consistent with Mauer's. Langan, however, pegs the beginning of the trend of increase at 1973, after a decade of declining populations, while Mauer's discussed only the '80s. Langan too, found a disproportionate rate of growth in imprisonment for black males in their 20s.

Both reports question the reasons for the explosion in imprisonment and come up with widely disparate answers. Mauer postulates that somewhere between "much" and "at least some" of the disparity in international rates of imprisonment is the product of different crime rates and rates of violent crime particularly. Inexplicably, however, he merely asserts that this important point has been demonstrated elsewhere and analysis of it was beyond his scope, despite acknowledging that the question needs more work. Langan, on the other hand, uses crime report and arrest statistics for 1973, when U.S. prison populations were more in line with those of other countries, and 1986 to arrive at the somewhat harder conclusion that crime rates accounted for only about 9% of the increase in prison admissions. Statistical and other factors support the conclusion that while increased crime rates, both relative and absolute, have contributed to the growth of imprisonment, the contribution has been relatively minor. Hence, it is apparent that political factors are the major motors of the prison expansion. Of course, all crime is driven by sociological factors, but neither report explored them.

The reports agree that harsher criminal justice policies are primarily responsible for bulging prisons. Both reports pay particular attention to mandatory sentencing, longer sentences, parole restrictions and the war on drugs. With a million prisoners, small policy changes in these areas predicated on the arbitrary preferences of officials result in thousands of additional prisoners, and both authors agree that changes in them have been large. Langan also addresses the impact of demographics on rates of imprisonment, given the widely held view that it is a major influence.

Mauer found no cause and effect relationship between incarceration rates and crime rates. While crime has decreased overall by 3.5% since '89, it fell by 15% during 1980-84 and rose by 14% during 1984-89. Prison populations in the two periods grew by 41% and 52% respectively. Further, violent crime has grown, the overall decline in crime generally resulting from larger decreases in lesser crime. The FBI's (Federal Bureau of Investigation) recently released preliminary study of crime for 1990 found overall crime up 1% and most violent crime up about 10%. Since Langan's report is premised on data only up to 1986, Mauer's conclusion that there is no inverse relationship between incarceration and crime rates is more credible than Langan's that there is.

Many criminologists contend that the larger number of males (who comprise 95% of the prison population) recently entering their 20s, the most crime prone years, is a substantial cause of rising incarceration rates. Langan disparages this notion but then puts the percentage of growth due to such demographic shifts at 20%, hardly insignificant. Application of the age and race specific imprisonment rates of 1974 to prison prone populations of 1986 yielded a rate of growth 40% higher than the historical average and an absolute increase of 32%. Total absolute growth between 1973 and 1986 turned out to be 136%, meaning demographics accounted for more like 24% of the growth. In addition, these figures are likely underestimates because they don't include any sociological multiplier to account for the magnified impact of factors such as increased peer pressure and increased intra-group competition as the number of people in any group and the crime-prone age group in particular becomes larger. Thus, the criminologists advancing the statistics and Langan failed to recognize the non-linearity of the demographic changes' impact.

With respect to demographics, Mauer notes only the grossly disproportionate incarceration of black males, especially those in their twenties. Incomprehensibly, he does not include racism in his list of problems faced by black males that contribute to their being locked up at such a high rate. He also says that his comparison of black male incarceration with that of South Africa is not to condone any South African policy but as a point of reference. The point could have been more explicit: something is fundamentally wrong when a country so vociferously claiming to be democratic and egalitarian imprisons more of its people of color than an explicitly racist and anti-democratic regime.

Mauer concludes that mandatory sentencing laws have exacerbated prison overcrowding and reduced judicial discretion (and thus the possibility of a shorter or non-prison sentence). He does not, however, support this conclusion. Langan contends that it is not clear that mandatory sentences are a cause of prison population growth. For this assertion he relies on a table he alleges reveals no change in the offense distribution of felons delivered to state prisons between 1974 and 1986. But the chart is amendable to a much different interpretation. It shows a 60% increase in prison sentences for sexual crimes, a 33% increase in those for drug offenses and a 220% increase in imprisonment for "other convictions". These are areas previously more likely to see shorter or non-prison sentences and in which mandatory sentences appear to be most proliferating. 46 states and the federal government now have some mandatory sentences. In addition, the imposition of mandatory sentences often serves only to lengthen sentences rather than making the difference between prison and the streets, thus diminishing the ability of offense distribution statistics on admissions to reveal their impact.

Langan also disparages the idea that longer sentences and conservative prison release policies keeping people in longer are responsible for much of the explosion in prison populations. He predicates his contention on a table he purports shows a decline in sentence lengths and time served between 1943 and 1986. However, he fails to account for the impact of a fact of which he makes much elsewhere: the return of determinate sentencing in many jurisdictions. Determinate sentences have replaced many wild "top" sentences like to 2 to 20, 5 to life and those that specify only a top with much smaller numbers like 4, 6, 8 that in all cases require much more time to be served than an indeterminate sentences of the same number. They frequently require more actual time served for the same offense. This, along with greatly increased incarceration for minor offenses, rather than actually declining sentence lengths, appears to account for the statistical decrease in numerically higher sentences and the great increase in low and medium numbers. It also explains the decreased median sentence and time served.

Furthermore, a significant part of the increase in imprisonment can be ascribed to harsher policies by parole boards in returning parolees to prison and by courts and probation authorities in revoking probation and imposing imprisonment. The number of parole violators returned to prison without new sentences rose from 6% of the parole population to 14% between 1974 and 1986 and evidence suggests that probationers fared similarly. The significance of these policy changes is further

Continued on page 9

AIDS Education and Lesbian Pride in Pleasanton

The following interview was for Queeradio, a week-long celebration of lesbian and gay political culture on CKLN radio, a Toronto FM station. Sunday Harrison, a member of the Bulldozer collective, spoke with Linda Evans from the Resistance Conspiracy Six.

LE: I'm sorry it took so long to get back to you. We had some police interference, unfortunately. Actually it's kind of a miracle that it happened at all – there was a major shakedown here and they scattered everything in my cell. It looked like a hurricane. Your letter was among the things that they scattered, and it took about two days to find it. Then they didn't turn the phones on, it was one thing after another. Forced spring cleaning.

SH: What support work should we be doing right now?

LE: The main thing we are urging people to do is to be creative and persistent in support for Mumia Abu-Jamal because his life is really in danger and it would be a tremendous loss. Canada doesn't have a death penalty, does it?

SH: Not at the moment.

LE: International support is very important and you have demonstrably a lot of connections with people in the U.S. so your support for him can have a ripple effect. Certainly that is critical.

More ongong campaigns include support for Silvia Baraldini getting to Italy, Geronimo may get a new trial, Leonard may get a new trial.

SH: It's an honour to have you with us on CKLN as part of Queeradio. What is your experience as a lesbian political prisoner, both within the anti-imperialist movement and in the lesbian and gay movement?

LE: I think that the outpouring of support from the lesbian and gay community has been one of the things that has most surprised me and that we all (*the R.C. Six, ed.*) collectively have most appreciated because it's been a sharing of experience, and a learning process both for us inside and hopefully for some of our comrades on the outside. The fact that several political prisoners have come out as lesbian or as openly gay people has been important because I think it's really pushed a struggle against homophobia in the political prisoner support community and in general has also raised the level of awareness in the lesbian and gay community of political repression. So that's been one of the effects. Another has been our own awareness from being inside prison of the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic and the need to do work in whatever community you're in to fight AIDS and to fight for treatment and support for people who have AIDS. Hopefully the fact that many of the revolutionaries who are in prison are lesbians or gay men can bring an additional element of militancy, a recognition that the state is really who we have to fight to win our liberation as lesbians and gay people, and to realize some of the more serious implications of fighting for freedom for ourselves, our community and our families. And thinking about what this can mean in the context of a whole world struggle for liberation. It is, you know, very complicated at this point in history.

SH: You mentioned other political prisoners coming out, can you elaborate on that?

LE: Judy Clarke has been out as a lesbian almost since she arrested in '82 or '81, and that had a very important impact, because she was associated with the Black Liberation Army and has been very strong in her support for the Black Liberation movement throughout her whole history as a political activist. Laura Whitehorn and Susan Rosenberg were two of my co-defendents, and we were collectively able to really learn a lot from the lesbians & gay men who were supporting us, about what the connections are between revolution, lesbian and gay oppression, and of solidarity with national liberation movements and movements for self-determination. Those are some of issues that we really need to develop and investigate for ourselves in terms of political dialogue.

SH: What relation do you see between the lesbian and gay movement and national liberation struggles? For example, is there a revolutionary component to lesbian and gay cultures?

LE: You could tell me better than I could tell you at this point! I really hope so, because what we have to do is look at the kind of world that we ultimately want to live in, both as individuals in our lifetimes and what kind of society we want to build for future generations. We want a revoluionary society where there is no oppression, where people are not exploited for thieir labour, where there isn't any racism, where nationalities have self-determination and control over their own lives and their culture can be preserved. A society where cultural differences can have meaning and can be shared as a richness. In the U.S. there is a huge English-only movement, one of the most regressive, reactionary movements that exists, because it's going to rob all people of the richness of Hispanic culture. This is cultural genocide. The cultural genocide that Native Americans have faced is not just historic, it goes on every single day. We all are robbed of a tremendous amount of history and richness of culture when other cultures are destroyed. To me, the development of any kind of revolutionary women's culture, lesbian culture or gay culture has to be seen in the context of respect for other cultures and kind of a mutual process of sharing and learning. We have to fight for that as lesbians and gay men, and we also have to fight against our own racism and the racism of our movement in order to make those kind of concrete alliances in our day-to-day lives. We can build strong alliances where we can all move together towards the kind of society that we want to live in.

SH: That's a very empowering vision.

LE: I think people are afraid to be visionaries anymore. I have been told that I suffer from idealism but I'm really a very practical and realistic person. We have to have some kind of dreams that we want to fight for; you have to have hope and some vision of the future if you're going to be serious about making change, especially the kind of radical change necessary to address all the wrongs that the U.S. government, especially, has inflicted against the people of the world. In Canada you share some of the problems we have here, but Canada is not as imperialistic as the U.S. Certainly the U.S. is imperialistic towards Canada.

SH: Canada has its own contradictions. One difference here is a third electoral party to the left of the other two.

LE: I used to be against fighting for reforms. I think that was wrong. I believe that we have to fight for reforms on a day-to-day level because there really are a lot of survival struggles going on, about racism, about education, about police brutality, about basic needs like health care, AIDS, housing. As revolutionaries we need to maintain some kind of context that addresses the whole; that really addresses the issue of power and who has power in our society. I think that's very important for lesbians and gay men, because we could view our oppression as being only by individuals, but actually it's very systematic and systemic. The system is our enemy because it reinforces the kind of hatred of gay people that we suffer from every day. I feel strongly that we have to keep that context in mind as we organize and as we do our work, so that we maintain a vision that's broader. But fighting for reforms can be part of legitimate struggle.

This is a time of tremendous attack against liberation movements all over the world, so it's hard to be optimistic, to maintain the hope that you need to really be serious about fighting, but it's not impossible. We need to strengthen that hope in each other. That's part of what building revolutionary culture, and revolutionary women's culture, can be about.

SH: Are you able to continue with that vision, that sense of community, inside?

LE: I have been very fortunate. I feel tremendous support and love from a lot of lesbians across the country and all over the world. I feel very much a part of the community, but unfortunately in kind of an abstract way. It's hard to be isolated as we are from the day-to-day ideological struggles, discussions of strategy, and warmth and friendship of day-to-day life. This government is very succesful in how it builds its prisons, and I'm fortunate to be near San Francisco. I do have visitors, which a lot of other prisoners do not have. But sometimes no matter how hard I try and no matter how hard my friends and comrades try, my sense of community gets a bit abstract

SH: What about other dykes and sympathetic straight women inside?

LE: One of things I believe will pull us together more than anything is that we've started an AIDS education group here at Pleasanton. There are HIV-positive women in the group, and women, both lesbian and straight, who have family members or friends who are HIV-positive or who have died of AIDS. We're breaking down some of the walls between lesbians and straight women here.

SH: So AIDS is the catalyst for that?

LE: Very much so.

When I first came here, there was no AIDS education whatsoever, no counselling before people took an HIV test. I went to the different cultural groups here at Pleasanton and explained my own experience at the D.C. jail where I was a peer educator and counsellor for people with AIDS or who were taking an HIV test. A number of women from each group, the Four Winds Cultural Group, the Latina Club, and the Black Cultural Workshop, said they would commit themselves to helping build an education project which we are now in the process of doing.

In prison your relationships are constantly under attack by the administration, so lesbians are closeted. Sex is illegal. You can go to the hole, you can be punished, lose your job, lose your cell, lose a lot of good time so that your sentence is prolonged. Physical displays of affection are illegal, so you can't even hug a friend who is crying or who has received bad news in the mail, etc. Pleasanton used to be a co-ed institution, and at that point it was legal for men and women to hold hands, but now that it's all women it is illegal. There's all kinds of subtle ways that the real discrimination against lesbians plays out. The attitudes of the staff vary a great deal but are almost uniformly anti-gay. We experience a lot of negative remarks, both from staff and other prisoners, some of whom are bigots, especially the white women. There's a tremendous amount of racism here. It's one of the hardest things that I've had to deal with. The cultural organizations are all active, and basically pretty apolitical, although they do sponsor things like Black History Month and various special events.

There are 800 women here, it's extremely overcrowded, and there are a lot of problems. A tremendous number of women have a history of being abused their whole lives, either sexually or physically. There's no group for them. Prison is not geared toward rehabilitation, or any kind of counselling or real help, and one thing I hope I will be able to do as a political prisoner on a very individual and unfortunately minimal level is build some empowering relationships with other prisoners so that within the limits of being in prison we can help each other as much as possible.

SH: It's been an honour to talk with you today.

LE: Listen, the honour's mine. This honour business (*laughing*) tends to put people on a pedestal. I'm an ordinary person. I made choices in my life that were about commitment, dedication and struggle for revolution, but I believe those choices are accessible to everyone and they don't have to have the consequences they did for me. We're human beings, not much different from any of you.

Political activists should realize that prison is not the end of your life. It's not something to be mortally afraid of. It is important to have goals not defined by fear of the state or fear of going to jail. I hate being in prison, and I'm struggling by every means I can to get out, from legal remedies to political organizing.

We struggle very hard inside to be productive, to be political, to be in contact with our communities. The government is trying to make our world as small as possible, to make us feel weak and discouraged, but your support enlarges our world. ∞

Peltier

Continued from page 1

seven years by both FBI Special Agent David Price and William Janklow, (then state prosecutor, later Attorney General and Governor of South Dakota — who is quoted as saying "The only way to deal with the Indian problem in South Dakota is to put a gun to the AIM leaders' heads and pull the trigger.") The book was finally re-released this June. Video and film documentaries are in the works, and after more than fifteen years Leonard Peltier may yet become a name in U.S. popular culture.

For addresses to write demanding Peltier's freedom, see page 11. ∞

Feminist Anti-Psychiatry Conference

Sponsored by: Phoenix Rising, Resistance Against Psychiatry and Women Studies Program at OSIE.

Panel features: Kate Millet, Bonnie Burstow, Carmen Pratt and Helen Levine.

September 28, 1991 at 6:30 P.M. OISE Auditorium, Bloor and St. George $8.00.

Letter — Michael Stotts Responds to Criticisms

The article written by Larry Giddings in the May/June '91 issue of *PNS* (Michael Stotts, Uncovered?) demonstrates his total lack of information about P.A.N.A.L., *Behind The Walls (BTW)*, and myself. Since I have been indicted and **put on trial** by Giddings and *PNS*, I'll make the following response to the allegations:

First of all, I do not know, nor have I ever met Mr. Giddings. If his claim of being a prisoner for the last 20 years is true, I find it a bit odd I have never met him in the 21 years I've been in this system. Regardless, the only thing I know about this man is that several months back, the P.A.N.A.L. organization sent in letters on his behalf to the Freedom Now! Committee, asking that they reconsider the rejection of Giddings and urged them to grant adoption as a political prisoner. We co-signed this only because Bill Meyers (WSA) and other political activists who are trusted in the P.A.N.A.L. network urged cooperation and a joint effort. This is the extent of any dealings we've had with Giddings, and these were not direct. We also noted his plight in one of our publications, *BTW*, and asked for additional support.

It does not surprise me that Giddings never received a response to the letters he claims to have sent. P.A.N.A.L does not have an office in San Francisco, nor did our New York office (headquarters) receive a letter there. For future reference, our offices are located in New York, California, Indiana, and New Orleans. I also seriously question Giddings sincerity, stating he wanted to meet and make contact with a "potential friend". He never sent us letters, and it is just that simple.

We are not a "newly active" group of people in the anti-authoritarian community, as Giddings writes. P.A.N.A.L was established in 1977, and *BTW* began publication in 1988. *BTW* is just one of many publications we print, and is not our only project. We also choose to operate quietly, do not go out of our way to attract the police's attention, do not grant "interviews", and we don't welcome people we don't know "with open arms" as a lot of groups do. If by chance a member of our staff did get a letter (and they didn't) from Giddings, and he attempted to ask a lot of questions or pursue his "interview" cross-examination tone, the letter would have gone in the garbage. Just who does Mr. Giddings think he is anyway?

Larry Giddings suggests (actually accuses) that I am using the anarchist community to further my own personal means and goals, and to finance *BTW*. Mr Giddings is again confused. The money spent publishing *BTW* (with the exception of a very few small donations) is out-of-pocket personal funds (no Larry, we won't tell you how it was earned) and I am offended by his suggestion that I would rip off the anarchist community. Actually, as much as I hate to say this, if we would have depended on the help of the anarchist community to get things established, we'd still be a non-entity. Support for prisoner/prisoner related projects is a low priority in the movement.

Giddings claims commitment to protecting prisoners from "bad jacketing", and turns around and hangs one on me, based on alleged information he got from people he "trusts". If Giddings has served the amount of time he says, then he would certainly know "trust" is non-existent (or should be) in a prison setting, and that blind trust is a leading contributor to murders, fights, bad jackets and new cases. Furthermore, the people he claims to "trust" (whom I know) are the same ones that have lead him on this hummer.

The El Reno incident Giddings writes about is also severely botched in terms of accuracy. I was never "confronted" by a "victim" while separated by a chain link fence on the rec yard while in transit there. (Giddings never does say what this person was supposed to be a victim of.) Again, his "trusted" prisoner friends have deliberately given him bad information, since they were there. The real story of what happened goes like this: After being returned to my cell from rec, I found out a youngster had been talking shit about me to other convicts. The kid did not confront me with his gossip, and he certainly had the chance because we were in the same rec cage. The next day I went out to rec to confront him, and we ended up in different cages. Regardless, I still questioned him about his remarks and all he had to say was he only repeated something "he had heard". The guy did not express any desire to take the matter further.

Mr. Giddings describes me as: Red Hair, overweight, acne scars, tattoos. He likewise makes a big fuss over a photo that appeared on the cover of *The Affiliate*, Peter Riden's publication in Canada. If Giddings wasn't so quick to try and make a federal case out of this, and had contacted Peter, he could have put to rest the confusion. As for what I look like: Blond hair and red beard, no "acne scars" as he says, and I'm 6'2" and weigh 320 lbs. I've never been known to refuse my rec, hide from a fight or tremble in my cell. Point made?

I am not the "editor" of *Behind The Walls*. Ted Beardsley is my editor of this publication. I am the founder of the P.A.N.A.L. organization and *Behind The Walls* is one of our publications.

Barry Carpenter (aka Gizmo Stress) was, at one time, the penpal and book program manager for P.A.N.A.L. Since he left the organization, he has led a campaign against us and said bad things as well. Barry became disenchanted and left P.A.N.A.L. after his girlfriend failed to manipulate and con my editor and I into letting them move into our headquarters in New York. Barry was more of a problem than an asset to P.A.N.A.L. in that he failed to perform simple tasks, answer his mail, properly manage book donations and keep the penpal listings updated. He doesn't know how to keep his mouth shut with trusted information and has a bad habit of gossiping and lying. We were thrilled with his resignation.

Giddings states that I failed to counter allegations about me. This is not true to a certain extent. I have made response to some of the ridiculous allegations that have been made. However, I will not waste endless hours of my time countering bullshit and explaining myself to people who I owe no explanations. My days are filled just trying to keep up with prisoner's rights litigation (Example: *U.S. vs Stotts 925 F.2d 83 (4th Cir. 1991)*), and many other projects. All my criminal cases are published and I've written three books, if someone is so damned obsessed with knowing more about me.

I am not an informant nor an "agent of the state", and P.A.N.A.L. is not some clandestine front for the government to collect intelligence. Giddings' preoccupation with advancing hysterical conspiracy theories and his pompous ranting makes one wonder about his mental state. His rhetorical dicta never allows the reader to form a logical conclusion on the information he offers, instead, leaving you wondering what the point is he's trying to make! He doesn't want to "jacket" someone without proof, yet he does. He agrees with Paul Wright (*Prisoners' Legal News)* and Bill Meyers (*WSA*) and what they had to say on this matter, yet takes still another opinion. I don't think Giddings knows what the hell he agrees with or disagrees with!

Most of this controversy started over two letters (one unsigned) that appeared in *Anarchy* magazine. The letters alleged I had informed and been responsible for a drug bust at the federal joint in Memphis. To set the record straight, the details of this incident are: I loaned a guy a rather substantial amount of money, as a favor, no questions asked. The feds bust his wife and another gal outside the prison fences dropping drugs in the the middle of the night a few days later. Guards at the prison take the guy to the hole; the women go downtown with the feds (and spill their guts), and four other convicts (including myself) are taken to the hole. A grand jury indicts the guy, his wife and the gal with her. No evidence on any of the rest of us, so we just get administrative charges filed on us by the prison. (We were convicted.) Other than the women spilling their guts to the feds, nobody "ratted" on anyone that I know of. The FBI attempted to question me once about the money, but I refused to speak to them period. What got everyone busted is a matter of record: the guy I loaned the money to was talking on the phone to his wife across the street in a motel, giving directions to her on where to place the drugs! It is really that simple. The guy is a lame and got himself busted. I never got my money back from him, and I have recently learned that this individual is spreading phony documents on me now. I was informed just days ago that Barry Carpenter is sending these papers around which he allegedly got from the guy. These are not authentic, and were forged to use as an excuse to not repay the loan. And for him to place the blame for his stupidity (getting others busted) on someone else.

I was very disappointed that *PNS* would publish the Giddings article prior to allowing me the opportunity to make response and to defend against the same. The *PNS* addendum, at the end of the article, making comment on a letter I allegedly wrote to *Anarchy*, is also derogatory and appears to be made to bolster the validity of Gidding's story, misleading the reader. First of all, I did not write the letter that was printed in *Anarchy*. This is the devious work of a crank, and I have advised *Anarchy* of this as well. But more importantly, *PNS* chose not to make any positive comment on the other letter appearing from my editor, and instead was quick to jump on the bandwagon to persecute me. Furthermore, while I would not personally choose to use "legal action" against *Anarchy* for the monstrous disservice they dumped on me, I'm curious to know what recourse PNS would take? I mean, hey, I am locked in a cage, and this kind of stuff causes murders, which goes without saying. Would you suggest I write endless "responses" as I am trying to disarm some nut who decides he's gonna stick me based on the article? How many people read Giddings article, but won't see or read this? Get real people!

I do not intend to partake in further bickering back and forth on this subject again. Instead, I'd like to remind people (not to slap my back either) that P.A.N.A.L. has spent alot of time and money to help the prisoner. This is a fact. The rewards have been manifested by the results of the endeavor. Many who we have had the pleasure to serve, help and assist know this. We have never "questioned" or "interviewed" those asking for help. We have asked for nothing in return and certainly gave all we had. To even suggest the mission of P.A.N.A.L. is covert in terms of "information gathering" borders on lunacy. There are a lot of folks who know this also, and that's what counts. I am not going to wave a flag.

Finally, a big "thanks" is in order to Bill Meyers (WSA), Paul Wright (PLN) and Arthur Miller (*Bayou La Rose)*, for their public support since this controversy began. And for the behind the scenes solidarity, and to countless others who have spoken up for us. A lot of these folks we've worked with for a long time. It has been great.

Shalom

Michael J. Stotts, P.A.N.A.L.
POB 4167 Halfmoon, NY 12065

Anyone interested in the documentation against Michael Stotts, should write to:
Barry Carpenter, POB 1153,
Russelville, AL 35653 ∞

Cons In Prose *con't from centre*

revealed when they are considered as a subset of the imposition of longer sentences factor of prison population. To that significance is added the greater amount of time being required by remaining parole boards (the more conservative release policies mentioned earlier) both before parole and for parole violations with or without new sentences, the latter being omitted from both reports. In many cases, these changes have rendered the prisoner's sentence(s) larger now than was intended for the offense when imposed, amounting to an ex post facto enhancement.

Langan claims that the impact of the so-called war on drugs in expanding prison populations is small, even though drug sentences have been the fastest growing percentage of total prison admissions in the past decade. Nor does he acknowledge that it is not only drug sentences that are increased by it. In any event, he does acknowledge that the 8% increase in prison admissions he attributes to the war on drugs has probably grown "since around 1984", indicating reliance on old statistics. Mauer's report and other media suggest that this effect has at least doubled since 1985. Neither Langan or Mauer pointed out that the war on drugs is not really on drugs at all but is on civil liberties. It is the means by which the ruling class is developing the political will to expand its apparatus of control — including prison capacity — sufficiently to grant it security in a future of increasing privation for the majority.

Both reports note that there is now a greater likelihood that a prison sentence will stem from an arrest. According to Mauer, 196 people were sentenced to prison per 1000 arrests in 1980 and in 1987 it was 301. Langan claims only that increased likelihood of a sentence accounts for 51% of the growth in prison populations. Aside from being debatable, the issue is not so much the likelihood as what accounts for it. It is demographics, because the higher proportion of younger, less sophisticated offenders are involved in activities more likely to elicit prison sentences and are less able to dodge the consequences. Indeed, the rapid growth in offences likely to result in a prison sentence would argue against increasing the likelihood of a sentence if one sees Langan's inverse relationship between the two. Is the diminished change of probation responsible? The growth in mandatory sentencing? Impaired due process in legal proceedings? Is it the social and economic decline and disenfranchisement of large portions of the population (which neither report addressed)? Is it diminished moral authority of the law resulting from the "just-get-mine" '80s that saw massive and widespread illegality by members of the legal and social establishment — the ruling class? Is it the political need of that ruling class to strengthen its repressive apparatus of social control? Clearly all of these factors and others figure largely and cannot be so easily lumped together.

Langan's main premise that the only change found to have major impact on record prison populations is the increased likelihood of a prison sentence. aside from not being illuminating by itself, has been assassinated by reality, time and small analysis. So, too, feel his attendant notion that there is a correlation between more sentences and less crime. Verily, the selective use of statistics (and criminal justice statistics must always be taken with a grain of salt, given who collects them and how) by a professional statistician and his tenuous conclusions suggest that the article was a politically motivated response to Mauer's report intended to drown Mauer's meagerly supported but essentially correct findings in numerology and the appearance of authority.

Mauer's report concludes that policy makers of the '70s confronted with responding to crime with costly repression or prevention and rectification of crime's causes, chose wrong. He attributes the choice to criminal justice being particularly prone to the influence of simplistic political rhetoric. He points out that the choice is a demonstrated failure because we are faced with all the same problems that existed in 1980 except now they are worse. What could be a clearer demand for change?

Choosing solutions for the problem of burgeoning prison populations requires an accurate assessment of prisons' true role. They are **not** primarily to protect the public and handle crime in the U.S.; that is their public facade but is, in actuality, only a secondary function. The first is social control and manipulation. Accordingly, recommendations that the federal government perform yet more studies of crime and punishment and their causes and that it initiate corrective programs contrary to its needs and intent are worse than a waste of time. More appropriate reforms would seek to increase the involvement of the community in corrections and decrease the power of the agencies of repression. Mauer's suggestion for alternatives to incarceration, repeal of mandatory sentencing laws, stimulating public dialogue on corrections and providing effective post-prison services in order to reduce recidivism are steps in this direction. Such reforms give people air with which to increase their liberatory practice toward throwing off the yoke of the apparatus completely. ∞

The Marionette

May-June 1991

Number 55

Washington Putz

Starting on the front page of the 28/May/91 edition of a Washington, DC, newspaper often consider the #2 daily in the country, there appeared a long tract about USP Marion by Reporter Michael Isikoff. Isikoff's article displayed little interest in his subject and a marked willingness to be duped by greasy-tongued government "sources". Far has this paper sunk since the days when it had investigative reporters of the sort who broke the Watergate scandal. *Sic Transit gloria. . .*

The errors start right in the subtitle with the implication — flatly stated later — that dungeons like Marion are necessary to "handle" "incorrigible" felons. There are no incorrigible felons. Anyone can be reached through the right combination of positive socialization, training and incentive. The myth that there are legions of prisoners who are irrevocably nasty is necessary to create and maintain support for instruments of repression like Marion and its many clones. The police apparatus needs these dark concrete corners not to protect the public but to control and manipulate it.

Isikoff's mistakes continue with the front page claim that increases in violent crime and drug trafficking have fueled unprecedented prison growth during the '80s. From the meager evidence with which Isikoff supported this fueling claim, the converse — that the growth in incarceration fueled crime rates — would be equally valid. But Isikoff demonstrates his bias by neglecting to mention that point. The question is academic, though, because there was no correlation between crime rate and incarceration rate during the '80s (See article "Cons in Prose: Good and Bad" in centrespread.)

Isikoff also parrots the same ol', tired, worn out, discredited propaganda that has been the official line of justification for the Marion lockdown since its inception. The lockdown was **not** precipitated by a "near riot". The two guard killings Isikoff mentions happened in the Control Unit, a remote part of the prison so operationally separate from the the rest as to be functionally another prison. The prisoner death he cites occurred in a separate incident five days later, and guards subsequently released other prisoners for chow. Both control of the prison (all prisoners locked up) and a decision that there was no threat necessitating were thus demonstrated. Further, the incidents over some four months cited as leading to the lockdown involved only about 2 dozen perpetrators, roughly seven percent of the population. And all that was going on eight years ago with only a few prisoners who were here then still here. Yet the lockdown continues.

Isikoff goes on to further present the official line about Marion, but in a sly manner that purports to wrap itself in the journalistic icon "balance". Officials (plural, an unspecified but credibly numerous multitude) lauding Marion " see" things while critics (isolated or otherwise suspect individuals or nasty prisoners) can only charge, argue or complain.) Isikoff vilifies all Marion prisoners by pointing to a small minority who are **alleged** to be gangsters or "too unruly" or Marielitos — as if that term is somehow so synonymous with bad as to need no further qualification. Isikoff's "proof" of these allegations is no more than administrative word. Nor does Isikoff say what, if anything, these people actually did worse than others of their supposed kind in other prisons to get sent to Marion. Not even the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contends that mere association with a disparaged group (except for revolutionary politics) alone is grounds for Marion. Most of the prisoners Isikoff tries to use to paint all Marion prisoners nasty are not even on the so-called Marion mainline — not part of the "program". And aside from Isikoff's strange notion that gives six damningly weak paragraphs out of 33 to the case against Marion, balance where investigative weight is as overwhelmingly on one side as it is against Marion is vice.

Isikoff dismisses the notion of political prisoners at Marion by implying that Prisoner of War Sekou Odinga, to whom he did not even speak is no more than a criminal here for protection, a flat lie. He is an internationally recognized revolutionary here for "administrative reasons" (meaning no disciplinary reason) and was told by Associate Warden M. Collins that he will remain until he changes his political beliefs and associations. Other political, as well as social, prisoners have also been sent to and kept at Marion without even being accused of being the vicious predators who have committed acts of violence in other prisons for which officialdom claims Marion is reserved. Some were sent directly from the streets without even passing through a mainline prison. Those at particular risk of being consigned to Marion include those who adhere to radical politics, organize, are "too" litigious, are unduly critical of the prison operation, are disliked by staff or are felt to be influential. Even the mentally impaired are not safe from Marion and are sent here to avoid inconvenient treatment and worsen conditions for other prisoners. Isikoff mentions none of these reasons for affliction with Marion notwithstanding that a sizeable portion of Marion prisoners suffer from them.

This illustrates perhaps the most egregious disservice Isikoff did: he helped the prisonocracy legitimize Marionesque prisons for general use. The point of discussions of Marion is **not** the convictions for which the prisoner victims were incarcerated but what actions in other prisons resulted in their relegation to Marion and whether **any** actions warrant such a counterproductive regimen. Prison authorities justify control unit prisons as necessary to control management problems in more open prisons — as jail for jails. But that is more ruse than real. "Journalism" like Isikoff's, helps these reactionaries to blur the distinction between the "worst of the worst" and anyone with a serious sounding conviction, making dungeons like Marion easier to wield as an instrument of repression.

Isikoff also makes much of former warden Clark's insistence that Marion is working. First, there is the problem of the statistics upon which this notion is based. They do not reflect the claimed successes, claims further undermined by prisoner experience. They indicate more that instead of allowing other prisons to be more open, Marion has made them more repressive.

Plus, the numbers and the means by which they were generated are totally creations of the BOP and not amenable to independent verification, making them highly suspect. The BOP has been caught fabricating such material in the past.

Second, if Marion is working so well, why is the BOP building a new and larger dungeon at Florence, Colorado, with another on the drawing boards and four others rumored? Moreover, if Marion can cure "the worst of the worst" of the status and make them acceptable members of another prison community in about three years shouldn't it be able to make them recidivism-proof ready for the streets with another year or so? If Marion claims are true, surely a nickel sentence or, at the extreme, a dime should be sufficient to truly correct and eliminate recidivism.

Isikoff inaugurates his article with the contention that Marion is provoking debate about how society should deal with its violent and incorrigible felons, a wrong premise that foreshadows his advocacy of the official line. He misleadingly portrays prison officials as professionals possessed of some esoteric knowledge that allows them to maintain constant vigilance against the irremediably nasty in ways only they are qualified to determine. He mentions zero about the active official brutality upon which Marion is predicated or the passive brutality of bad water, poor medical care, sensory deprivation and all the other physical and psychological assaults attendant to lockdown. Prisoners, on the other hand are raving fiends always on the lookout for potential weapons and hovering on the verge of senseless mayhem who perhaps also snivel a bit. His vaunted balance didn't even extend to his getting their quotes straight or reading even a sampling of the voluminous material given to him. Hence, what he contributed to the debate that led his masters to sic him on this story was a disservice — not to mention years late. ∞

Prison Warden May Be Hazardous To Prisoners

by Tim Blunk

For many Marion prisoners, the worst nightmare is having to go to the BOP prison hospital at Springfield for medical treatment. Well, wake up guys, 'cause Springfield's coming to Marion in the person of new Warden Al Turner.

Usually the administrative shell-game has little bearing on the lives of prisoners. One-hack-in-a-tier is just about the same as the next. However, several recent investigative reports covering Turner's previous posting are truly cause for alarm. (See article on *60 Minutes* this issue.) The most recent is a June/14 *Washington Post* expose, "Prison Hospital May Be Hazard to Inmates". According to this article Turner's first official month as Marion's new warden will be spent shuffling to and from Washington, DC to testify about the ongoing horrorshow at Springfield, including the recent death of a prisoner during a "forced cell move." Rep. William J. Hughes (D-N.J.), chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee that oversees the federal prisons intends to hold hearings on Springfield in July. That's how bad it is, Congress actually feels compelled to hold a hearing.

It's doubtful that BOP Director Michael Quinlan or Al Turner are overly concerned. Congressional hearings in the past have amounted to kiss and make-up sessions.

What should concern Marion prisoners, however, is not just the fact that Turner arrives with blood on his hands, or the rest of his track record at Springfield, but that his posting at Marion is considered a **promotion** in the BOP. But then, why not promote the man who promoted Leland Wetzel to Chief of Surgery after he maimed Ronnie Holley (See *60 Minutes* article) and was exposed for myriad other abuses? It takes a while but you get the hang of BOP-think.

What may have put Turner over the edge for the job here was his "see-no-evil" complicity in the death of Eddie Bishop Jones. According to the *Post* article, Jones' death is being investigated by the FBI and the Justice Department's Civil Rights division. Apparently there's some suspicion that Eddie's civil rights were violated while he was being choked to death by the Springfield SORT (Special Operations Response Team).

Jones suffered from a severe case of diabetes. Without proper medication and a special diet he was subject to going into convulsions and insulin shock. His mother, interviewed in the *Post* said that he called often to complain they they weren't getting his medication right. Anyone who has been there will you that's standard procedure at Springfield. (The single most requested library book is the Physicians Desk Reference, a pictorial guide to pharmaceutical products.) Eddie was labelled "difficult to manage" by prison officials and was placed in segregation. "Difficult to manage" is another euphemism for "speaks up for his rights" — or at Springfield, "trying not to die." Eddie clearly wasn't into hassling with the guards for recreation. He wrote to his sentencing judge pleading with him to look into his complaints about receiving the wrong medication: "These people out here are practicing slavery and are slowly killing me. I don't want to die." The SORT team speeded up the process.

Eight days after sending this letter to the judge, Dec/11, Jones again complained about his food and refused breakfast. At that point the SORT team, in full riot gear, was called in to carry out the "forced cell move", a commonly used tactic for disciplining the "difficult to manage."

Two prisoners in nearby cells (one of whom is now in Marion) heard Eddie grasping for breath. The prisoner across from the cell saw the SORT members pressing on Eddie's neck while he yelled, "I can't breathe!"

Continued on page 11

Trivia That Hurts

Recently, I had a revealing exchange with the authorities at Gulag Marion. It started with an "Incident Report" which I will print here verbatim:

Incident: Giving money or anything of value to another (prisoner) without staff authorization.

Description of Incident: On 6/16/91 at 7:20 A.M., while monitoring the East Corridor Rec. Yard, I observed (prisoner) Jorgenson, P. #53599-146, place a small package on the ground next to the fence and cover it with rocks. I monitored the location of the package for the entire rec. period. After (prisoner) Jorgenson exited the rec. yard, I then went to the location where Jorgenson had covered up the package and I then discovered that a package of 10 ea. 29¢ stamps were covered up with rocks. [signed by] J. Eftink, S.O.S. (Senior Officer Specialist).

Comments of (Prisoner) to Committee Regarding Above Incident:

(Prisoner) Jorgenson stated that he was guilty of giving a gift to someone whom was less fortunate than himself. He also provided a written statement regarding same.

It is the finding of the committee that you committed the prohibited act. Committee decision is based on the following information. The incident report as written, the evidence recovered at the scene and the (prisoner's) admission of guilt to the charge both oral and written.

Committee Action: Change of housing and confiscation of the contraband.

Date/Time of Action: 6-18-91, 12:20 PM.

[signed by] Kerry Kemble/Chairman, Rick Ellet/Member, Steve Rowles/Member

My written defense, or "statement", as they call it, is as follows:

"Is it against your values and ethics to give a small gift to someone? I think it is quite contrary to the ethics and values of people generally to eschew the moral custom and practice of gift giving. Especially a gift to the more poor than you. One would be ostracized and labeled a "scrooge" for refusing to ever give a gift.

"Do you wish me to live by a value system which is contrary to your own and that of all other people?

"In the U.S.A., the message is loud and clear from the President's "Points of Light" benevolent ideas, throughout congress and through the whole country and all classes: Whatever you have, give to someone less fortunate.

"That's me! I am guilty of 'Attempting to give a gift' (less than $3.00) to one person who is more poor than I." (*End*)

In Marion Federal Prison, there is no contact between prisoners of different cell blocks except that once in a while one **may** see someone he knows through a heavily screened window to the yard, used by five cell blocks of prisoners at different times. You can take a chance on hollering "hi" and hope you don't get caught. I mention this to eliminate any thoughts that gifts such as mine could somehow be linked to threatening wheeling and dealing or extortion between prisoners of different cell blocks. So that was not even discussed at the hearing.

Now for what was discussed. I direct your attention to the three names at the bottom of the incident report. They are the Unit Manager, Counselor and Case Manager of the pre-transfer unit, all holding big authority in the Marion scheme. The one in the middle, Ellet, after participating in punishing me for attempting to do a moral right, speculated aloud about whether I really wanted to get transferred out of this joint. My response was that I am mad about representatives of this prison telling the public that we, the prisoners, are cancers, the worst of the worst, have not a bit of good in us at the same time they punish us at the first sign of a good deed, standard value, or moral right glimpsed in us.

The one named Rowles actually told me to **set aside** morals, ethics and values for the duration of the time that I am in B-Block (pre-transfer block) the next time they put me in there. I was stunned into silence by that.

The practical Mr. Kemble chimed in with "There are ways of doing what is right without getting caught."!

I am indeed in a madhouse governed by the insane.

Maintaining, barely.
Freedom,

Paul Jorgenson

(Editor's Note: Paul is the longest continuously held prisoner at Marion with a 14-year tenure. "Committee" refers to the unit disciplinary committee, authorized to handle all but the most serious infractions. "Change of housing" is not merely a cell change. It means Paul was kicked out of the pre-transfer unit and now must wait a year for a transfer for his horrible atrocity.)

Real Corrections

by Bill Dunne

Prison News Service #29, March-April, 1991, carried two articles about Israel. The first, "Hip Hip Hypocrisy", sought to contrast briefly the torrent of hyperbolic denunciations of Iraq for attacks, annexation, arrests and atrocities in Kuwait with the silence regarding the same acts by Israeli authorities against Palestinians. It was also intended to give some context for the second article, "WOFPP: A Hard Row to Hoe". That article described some of the conditions faced by Palestinian women in Israeli prisons and the work of WOFPP in trying to ameliorate their oppression. A WOFPP representative pointed out several errors in the background depicted by "Hip Hip Hypocrisy".

The first was that Palestinian homes could be destroyed for tax, debt and fine foreclosures. Not so. There are only two official reasons for demolishing houses: One is suspicion that any member of the family has been involved in anti-Israeli activities. The suspicion does not have to be proven in court, especially if the suspect has been killed. The second is if the house was built without a license. Though this may sound reasonable, there is virtually no way for a Palestinian to get a building permit.

In a paragraph in the original article inadvertently omitted from the version printed in *PNS*, it was stated that most of the detention camps for Palestinian prisoners are inside military bases. The implication being that the prisoners are kept there as shields. In actuality, the military bases grew up around and because of the camps, and none of them are very large.

In addition, while it is true that administrative detention orders — six months each and renewable indefinitely — need only be authorized by a military officer on mere suspicion of things that are not even illegal in most other countries, there is some judicial oversight. The original "Hip Hip Hypocrisy" said there was not. In most cases, however, it is "a mere formality, a rubber stamp" according to WOFPP. Palestinians also have the right to ask for help from the High Court of Justice. That right notwithstanding, the chance for such help is "nearly non-existent". If a member of the security police (Shabak) says that s/he has some classified information on the case, the court accepts the assertion at face value and rules without even asking to see the evidence.

Though the practical effect of the stacking of the Israeli deck against Palestinians is about what was stated in "Hip Hip Hypocrisy", as WOFPP notes, accuracy is important. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is atrocious without any exaggeration, even unwittingly as was the case in "Hip Hip Hypocrisy".

Rather than passively accepting whatever windfall increment of support might have accrued from the foregoing mistakes in which it was blameless, WOFPP demonstrated commendable principle by making the effort to correct them. Credibility dictates that we follow this example of telling it like it is and only like it is. In the words of Amilcar Cabral, "Tell no lies and claim no easy victories."∞

Marionette Editor:
Bill Dunne, #10916-086, P.O. Box 1000 Marion, IL 62959. Articles not otherwise attributed were written by me. Readers of *Prison News Service/ Marionette* are free to reproduce or otherwise use the material in them and are encouraged to do so. Money should be sent to Bulldozer, POB 5052, Stn A, Toronto, Ont. Canada M5W 1W4 or there might some day be no material in them.

If you don't like the news, go out and make some of your own.

Hazard *con't from page 10*

The official prison autopsy reported that Eddie Jones died of a heart attack. This is the same type of "heart attack" New York graffiti artist Michael Stewart suffered after being beaten and held in a choke-hold by New York City Transit cops. It's one of those "natural causes" - type deaths. Your heart "naturally" stops after the guard in the nice blue jumpsuit chokes off the blood supply to your brain. Hey, it could happen to anyone.

The Justice Department's Civil Rights folks (the ones worried about Eddie's right not to get choked to death) have asked the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (the ones who analyze neat ways to kill people) to review the autopsy. We can only hope that Springfield didn't have it together enough to cover their tracks like the NYC medical examiner did in the Michael Stewart case. Before announcing Stewart's naturally-caused heart attack, the good doctor removed the eyes from Michael's corpse, thereby sabotaging the key physical evidence used to determine whether death is caused by a choke-hold.

The *Washington Post* quoted Al Turner as saying, "We feel very badly about what happened to Eddie Jones. But to my knowledge, there's nothing to indicate that excessive force was applied." This is the attitude that the BOP is rewarding with a promotion. No doubt the SORT team at Marion looks forward to Turner's arrival. He's clearly a goon's kinda guy.

The BOP shouldn't get away with it. Turner is not fit to be charged with the responsibility over anyone's life, especially when there are investigations underway to determine his responsibility in a man's death. Write to Michael Quinlan and demand that Turner not be posted as warden of USP Marion. Write to Rep. William J. Hughes and encourage him to pursue his subcommittee's investigations and Turner's regime at Springfield and to get to the truth about Eddie Jones' death. ∞

NJ Prisons *cont'd feom page 4*

"terrorists". And in using this tactic, the groundwork is also created for ever more repressive conditions in prisons, especially for anyone engaged in political organizing. At the same time, the severe punishment inflicted on the activist prisoners serves as a warning to other prisoners.

The police, politicans and prisoncrats all know that the prisons are a powder keg, ready to blow at any time. Indeed, they themselves predict major riots will be coming by the mid-nineties and they're already preparing for it both politically and technologically. They will be carefully studying the past, even if we don't. And what they know very well is that they must smash any emerging political consciousness before it has a chance to develop. ∞

Support Leonard Peltier's right to a new trial!

In Canada, letters are needed calling for the government to acknowledge the fraudulent extradition and for it to annul it and seek Leonard's return:

Write to:
Min. of External Affairs Barbara McDougall
Minister of Justice Kim Campbell
Prime Minister Brian Mulroney
Jim Fulton NDP Member (Skeena)

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ont K1A 0A6

For more information, and to send copies of your letters, write:
LPDC Canada,43 Chandler Dr.
Scaroborough, Ont M1G 1Z1

In the U.S., ask that Peltier be granted executive clemency which would result in his immediate and unconditional release from prison.

Write to: President George Bush c/o The White House, Senator Daniel Inouye, Chairman ofthe Select Committee on Indian Affairs, c/o The Senate Building

For information and solidarity, write to:
LPDC, POB 583, Lawrence, KS 66044